DECEMBER 20 — 26, 1980

RS. 2

EVE'S WEEKLY

DOWRY : AS MUCH WITH US AS BEFORE

ADOPTION : THE LEGAL AND SOCIAL BARRIERS

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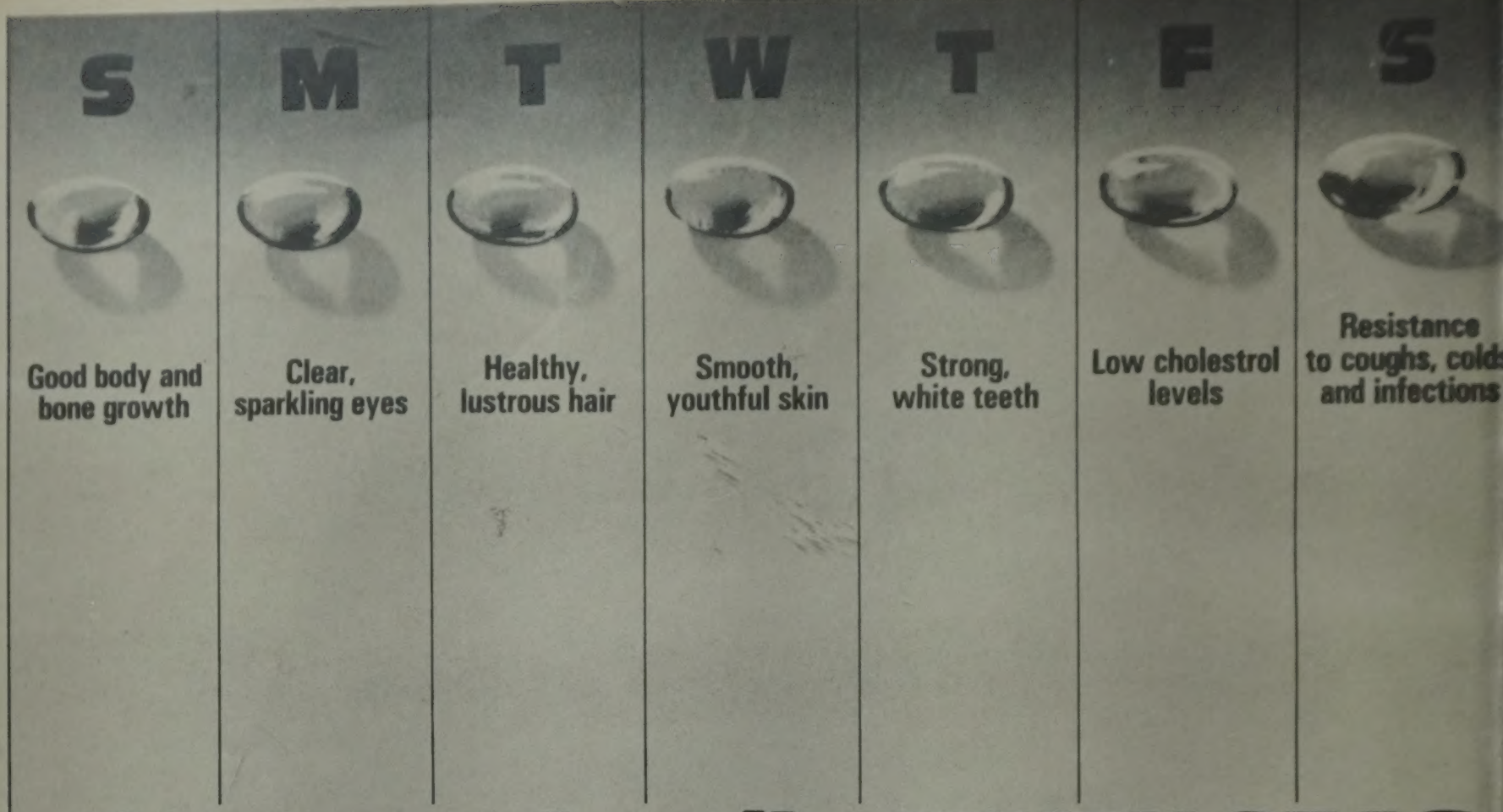

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Eve's Weekly

VOL. XXXIV NO. 51 BOMBAY DEC. 20 — 26, 1980

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PRINTED AND PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS: EVE'S WEEKLY LTD., BY **J. C. JAIN** AT SANJ VARTAMAN PRESS, BOMBAY SAMACHAR MARG, FORT, BOMBAY 400 023.

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION
Inland Rs. 85.
Foreign Rs. 127 (Sea Mail)

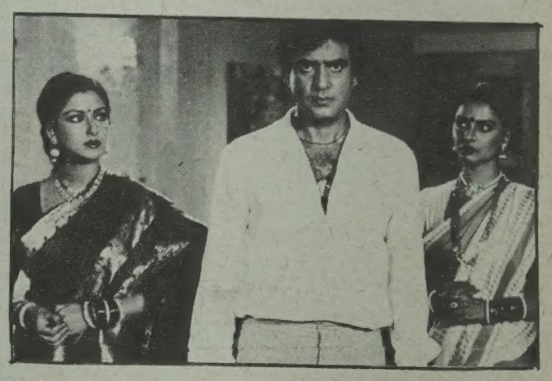
THIS WEEK

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

A new Bill on dowry is sought to be introduced in Parliament in an attempt to plug at least some of the loopholes in the current law relating to dowry. An analysis of the Bill, and a case study of a dowry death which reveals the lacunae in the existing law.

Page 10.

IMAGES OF WOMEN



Some truly obnoxious films have hit the Hindi screen recently and are threatening to be terribly popular. Fortunately, in the same period, one film does take a fairly positive look at the lives of middle-class working women.

Page 42.

PROMOTING THE ARTS AND CRAFTS

The person on our cover this week is engaged in some interesting work in the field of arts and crafts. A profile.

Page 13.

BARRIERS TO ADOPTION

There are enough social barriers to adoption in India without legal barriers to add to the problems. Considering the large population of unwanted, disabled, poor children in this country, the effort should be to make adoption more acceptable and possible. A look at the law relating to adoption.

Page 21.

ALSO

Bonsai: Talking of "little — **Page 15,** Mrs. Claus: An "interview" with the woman behind the ho-ho-ho — **Page 27,** "Ships That Pass": concluding chapter — **Page 30,** For The Winter Months: An over-top — **Page 47,** Film star: Sapna Sarang — **Page 51.**

REGULAR FEATURES

Your Page/**7,** Readers' Voice/**9,** Story/**16,** Comics/**25,** Fashion/**28,** Cookery/**37,** People Known & Unknown/**41,** Short Story/**49,** Women in Sport/**53,** Life's A Funny Thing/**57,** Frankly Speaking/**59,** People & Events/**60,** Horoscope/**62.**

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YOUR PAGE

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1st PRIZE

INDIA, MY INDIA!

Who has opened Pandora's Box? is the question everybody is asking today. There is lawlessness and anarchy everywhere, with criminal and unhealthy trends holding sway. There is no safety for one's life and property, as no one knows what is lurking round the corner. Housewives and other family members are murdered in broad daylight for their jewels and other valuables. Up in the North, there are frequent incidents of mass raping, torturing and even killing of poor Harijan women. These women, who are treated as untouchables, are not considered taboo when it comes to satisfying one's lust and passion. The irony of it is, the Police, who are the custodians of law and order, are themselves involved in fomenting trouble and disorder. The recent involvement of the Police with the blinding of undertrial prisoners was most heinous and dastardly. Are the mercilesss tentacles of the Police authorities closing round defenceless, vulnerable persons also? Then, indeed, nadir has been touched! Rank lawlessness and anarchy on one side and sheer apathy, amounting to callousness in professional circles on the other, complete the vicious and unholy picture.

What a come-down for a country, whose hoary culture and traditions are rooted in firm religious beliefs, truth and charity. Even now it is not too late to eschew hatred and violence and tread the path of love and charity.

MISS E. DHAMAYANTHY DEVASUNDARAM, Madras

It is bewildering, what is happening in this country. It's like watching a box-office horror movie — one jolt upon the other. And the denouement is the ultimate in horror: the policeman turns out to be the criminal, and the law is ineffectual...

2nd PRIZE

TALLER, BRAVER, RICHER, CLEVERER

Too often do we hear of highly qualified and successful career women saying that they would like to have those men as their life partners who can out-match them in every sphere; whom they can look up to with respect. Doesn't this sound rather ridiculous? For, on the one hand we talk of equality and fight for equal rights while on the other we are reluctant to relinquish our submissive image.

It is an accepted fact that man has imposed this submissiveness on woman, taking advantage of her physical weakness. In earlier times, women playing a secondary role in society had no other choice but to meekly submit to the whims and fancies of men. But now times have changed. Women are successfully emerging out of the shackles of economic dependence. They have almost proved themselves to be equal to men in all walks of life. And yet, despite all these admirable accomplishments it is surprising to know that they still seek a psychological crutch.

So, however unpalatable it may sound, it has to be accepted that woman is still clinging to those mental shackles or, rather, she is reluctant to discard them. Unless woman makes a conscious effort to exert and assert herself, maintaining her individuality, and emerges from her mental bondage, I am afraid she will have to go a long way in achieving equality in the true sense of the term.

USHA SASTRY, Pune

It's the conditioning, the brain-washing. If the woman is an M.A., she must have a Ph.D. for a husband. Why? Because she is still insecure enough to believe that the man must feel superior to her in every way or, else, her marriage is doomed.

3rd PRIZE

A BLOT ON SOCIETY

"Our manners are infinitely corrupted and wonderfully inclined to the worse", said Montaigne. This is the stage to which our country has reached now.

Woman was held respectable once but now, "being a woman is a very difficult task because it consists principally of dealing with man", just as Joseph Conrad remarked. We expound empty platitudes about the parity of man and woman, but is there any safety for women? From time immemorial, we have had instances to prove that whoever did wrong to a woman, brought ruin upon himself. But who realises this? The Baghpat atrocity and similar instances clearly portray the inefficiency of the law. 'Rape' has become common news, to fill up the daily columns. The fact that women are subjected to shame while (often) onlookers are unable to stop the crime, is a blot on our society. Such incidents lead women to the seething agony of frustration.

Where will this drama end? Who will answer the call of women?

LALITHA SANKAR, Trivandrum

No one — unless the women be-stir themselves. It is up to us to cry, shout, protest, hammer away. Unless our voices are heard — and heard well — it is unlikely anyone will pay heed.

TO TELL, OR NOT TO TELL...

For those who think that men (on the whole) are broad-minded, here's an incident — to make them think again. A husband coaxed his young wife into confessing about her past, promising he wouldn't do anything and that things would still be the same between them. The wife, blindly believing her husband, confessed that she had loved another man but, was not allowed to get married to him. Ultimately she gave in and got married according to her parents' wishes. The husband, of course, didn't keep his word, after he got everything out from her. The despicable fellow made her have an abortion and then sought a divorce. He even went to the extent of declaring that it wasn't his child she was carrying. The girl was terribly shocked by all this. She never expected her 'loving' husband to turn on her like this.

Don't you think that men are just awful? What is past, is past. It was quite unnecessary raking it all up and spoiling her future (he's already living with another woman!). She was really a good wife to him in all ways.

B. RENUKA, Karnataka

Well, men can't take it — and woman had better be aware of this. Even if this man had not divorced his wife, he would have flung her "confession" at her at every opportunity, making her life miserable. Women must realise they are under no obligation to reveal their past to anyone. If they choose to tell, they must be prepared for the consequences.

THE WINNERS

We thank all our readers who participated in our readership survey and give below the names of the ten winners who get an annual gift subscription and the ten winners who get the half yearly gift subscription.

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READERS' VOICE

Most articles raise a question, a comment or at least a criticism. Write them down and mail them to us!

THE IMPORTANCE OF BLOOD

Your article, "Women and Blood: A Special Relationship" (October 18), deserves applause. However, the author has elaborated on only a few cases where blood transfusion serves as a life-saving therapy. The importance of blood transfusion service is much more, especially when we talk in terms of quality control and safe transfusion therapy. We lack both quality and quantity. Millions of patients die for want of blood and those who get it suffer from the adverse effects of unsafe transfusion. It is high time the authorities realised the importance of this situation and ensured a safe and uninterrupted blood supply for patients who need it. All efforts should be directed towards community involvement. A broad based national voluntary blood donation policy should be adopted and new initiatives and training facilities provided.

G. HASSAN, Srinagar.

TOO MUCH COMPETITION

The article "Parents or Punters" (October 18) raises certain questions very pertinent to our times.

I visited a school in Ooty where one of the first things a child learns is to refrain from competition. They are encouraged to learn about themselves, to evaluate, not to compare. This is a healthy trend. After graduating from a public school, I find myself wondering whether it was worth it. The tremendous competition in every activity, leading to ruthlessness and heartbreak, is not what one likes to associate with youth. With this type of educational system, it is little wonder that "developed" countries like Britain and America breed cults of violence. And "developing" India seems to be following the same path. Is it worth it?

NARAYAN GOPALKRISHNAN, Indore.

CIRCUMCISION FOR WOMEN

I am happy that you have published a comprehensive article on the cruel and unneccessary practice of "female circumcision" (October 25). However, there is a form of circumcision which is the exact analogue of male circumcision. It involves the cutting of the prepuce of the clitoris, and is highly recommended by doctors in the U.S.A. for women with hooded clitoris. Since the entire clitoris is preserved, it makes sex more enjoyable. This minor surgery can be performed at a doctor's chamber under local anaesthesia. From my experience, I find sex more enjoyable after this form of circumcision.

"LILY", New Delhi.

INTERESTING ILLUSTRATIONS

Let me congratulate you on the interesting illustrations published in your special issue, "I Hate to Cook" (November 1).

C.F. RODRIGUES, Bombay.

MUCH ADO ABOUT COOKING

I was delighted to read Sherna Gandhy's piece, "The Reluctant Cook" in the I-Hate-To-Cook Special Issue (November 1) and have underlined with great glee certain key sentences to present to my fiance. It is this unreasonable, exaggerated importance attached to cooking, for girls especially, which casts aspersions on a woman's intellect and on her ability to do anything other than don aprons and turn out "delectable," "creative," "artistic," "appetising" meals!

KASHMIRA, Bombay.

NEXT WEEK

ISSUE OF DECEMBER 27, 1980

FOCUS ON URBAN LIVING

Who would live in the mad, mad world of India's big cities? Why, their mad, mad citizens, of course!

They might grumble about the housing crisis which is now entirely dependent on divine intervention for a solution, the prices which are shooting up as fast as the skyscrapers at Nariman Point, the dirt and pollution which have rendered both fresh air and water totally unavailable, and all the other myriad hardships that plague them every day. But ask them to move out, and the chances are that you'll be treated to a chorus of "No, never!" because, with all the problems and heart-and-headaches, there are many aspects of city life that can never be compensated for by the relative physical comforts of a small town.

SOME OF THE TOPICS:

The lure of the city and the reality.

Country folk who've made it big in the city.

The advantages and disadvantages of city life.

What the future holds for Indian cities.

What happens in the city while you sleep.

City glitterati.

FIGHTING THE

Still in the news and still neglected, dowry deaths continue to take place aided by ineffective legislation and official apathy. NEERJA CHOUDHURY examines the situation in its entirety, points out the loopholes in

EACH day brings to light yet another tale of harassment, torture or death of a young woman because of her parents' inability to satisfy the insatiable demand for dowry from her husband or his family.

The existing Prohibition of Dowry Act has been found to have many lacunae. This legislation enacted in 1961 by the Centre was followed by the State governments of Bihar, Orissa, Punjab, West Bengal, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh with the Karnataka anti-dowry bill being the latest in the line. The State laws have over the years been amended to make the giving and taking of dowry a cognisable offence. However, the long promised comprehensive Central legislation is still to be moved.

Almost all the amended State laws lay down a punishment of imprisonment of up to one year and a fine up to Rs. 5,000 for those held guilty. The West Bengal act provides for a fine up to Rs. 10,000. Mounting an attack on the ostentatious display of wealth at weddings, the Karnataka Bill also imposes a tax on such marriages.

Though the earliest legislation against dowry was passed in the country before Independence by the government of Sind, now in Pakistan, in 1946, not unexpectedly it remained only on paper. Those for whom the law was intended did not make use of it. Unfortunately by and large this state of affairs remains unchanged. In 1976 there were only four cases of prosecution in the country under the anti-dowry law. However, the spate of dowry deaths during the last two to three years have generated sporadic protests, demonstrations and a demand to give the law more teeth.

As far back as May 1978, the government had announced that it was considering amendment to the 1961 Act to make it more effective. During the monsoon session of Parliament this year, the then Minister for Education and Social Welfare, is believed to have called a meeting of all the women M.Ps to elicit their views on the amendments to the Prohibition of Dowry Act. The government promised to move a bill soon, though when it will be piloted is not clear.

The 1975 recommendations of the Committee on the Status of Women in India suggested making offences under the Dowry Prohibition Act cognisable. But as Lotika Sarkar, member of the CSWI, herself concedes, the situation has altered appreciably since then. Further and deeper thinking on the subject is called for. Though harassment of a girl for inadequate dowry was common in the past, gruesome killings were not frequent as is happening today.

Meanwhile parliamentarian Pramila Dandavate has moved a private member's bill on this subject in Parliament entitled the Dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Bill, 1980 which seeks to amend the 1961 Act. In its statements of objects and reasons, Ms. Dandavate hopes to plug a "number of loopholes in the present Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, which has resulted in the Act being ineffective."

In the Bill she makes dowry a cognisable offence, proposes a ceiling of Rs. 2,000 on it, restricts the extravagance at marriages and prohibits the display of presents. Along with these provisions, the Bill also seeks to remove the limit of one year within which a complaint has to be filed under the existing law. Because of this one year bar, hardly any complaints are filed as the women continues to harbour the hope of winning over her husband and in-laws.

Dowry was defined by the 1961 legislation as any property or valuable security given or agreed to be given either directly or indirectly by one party to the marriage to the other party or her or his parents or by any other person, at, before or after as consideration for the marriage of the said parties.

Since demands made "after marriage" have invariably been interpreted as "immediately after marriage" by judges — as is borne out by Shashi Bala's case (see adjoining report) — Ms. Dandavate specifies a period of one year after marriage during which gifts to the bridegroom or his family would be considered as dowry.

Expressing her reservations on the Bill, Lotika Sarkar of Delhi University Law department, says, "Those who want to extort will wait for a year which is a very short time and then mount their demands." Her view is reinfor-

GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER

IN India criminals go scot-free while the innocent are harassed," comments 52-year-old Satyarani Chaddha. She has reason to be bitter. Her 24-year-old daughter, Shashi Bala was, "burnt out like a pile of garbage" in Delhi last year because of the inability of her parents to meet the dowry demands of the boy's family.

For 18 months she has virtually done nothing else but knock on countless doors. Her cry for justice has reverberated in the corridors of power but evoked little response.

Five members of the boy's family were arrested, obviously because there were strong grounds for suspecting murder. For two months they were also refused bail. Then the police came to the conclusion that it was another case of suicide. Repeated representations by Satyarani Chaddha resulted in the case being transferred from the police to the crime branch and finally this year to the C.B.I. "We can't do anything unless you get us substantive evidence," C.B.I. officials tell Mrs. Chaddha. "Where am I to get substantive evidence from?" she laments. "I am after all a lay person." This substantive evidence they are asking for are eye-witnesses.

Ironically, over the last one and a half years, more than one policeman has counselled Mrs. Chaddha, "Why don't you leave the matter to God? There is justice in His Court. He will punish the guilty. Why are you running around like this in your old age, torturing yourself?" But when she asks, "Why don't you, In that case, wind up your thanas and courts?" they find her "quarrelsome" and "difficult."

Her relatives dissuade her, "Your daughter is after all not going to come back. Why are you running from pillar to post in this fashion, taxing your energy and staking your savings?"

The story of her daughter is no different from that of countless women who are burnt for not bringing a T.V. set, bicycle, refrigerator, or a scooter in their dowry. But Satyarani's story is also different from countless others in the sense that here is a mother, an illiterate woman, who had rarely stepped out of her house without an escort but who has not left a stone unturned to punish those responsible for her daughter's death and to prevent the same fate befalling "thousands of our daughters who die so needlessly."

The case brings into sharp focus yet once again the inadequacy of our laws, the incompetence of our investigating agencies, the hollow promises of our political leaders, the ad hoc approach of the existing women's organisations, and the superficial handling of the subject by the press, not to say anything about the callous indifference of society towards women's rights.

At the time of the engagement of Shashi Bala, there was no mention of dowry. Two days before the marriage, the boy, Subhash Bhasin, demanded a scooter, refrigerator and a T.V. set. Satyarani Chaddha and her husband gave him a refrigerator and Rs. 500 towards a T.V. set. But they were not in a position to give him a scooter, having borrowed heavily for the other expenses of their daughter's wedding.

After her marriage, Shashi Bala was harassed by her husband and his family, as is evident from the letters she wrote her

UNBEATABLE FOE...

the dowry law, suggests amendments that a Bill which the government says it intends to move in Parliament could include, and focuses on the hitherto futile attempts of one woman to get justice

ced by Subhadra Butalia, lecturer at Delhi's Dayal Singh College and member of the Stree Sangharsh Samiti. "Limiting it to one year will give a destructive handle in the hands of the in-laws who'll keep quiet for one year and then start torturing the girl."

The reason for inserting this clause, clarifies Ms. Dandavate, is because "in certain communities in Gujarat, for instance, within the first year all the expenses are borne by the parents of the girl." Again, "in Maharashtra the first Diwali is considered the 'Jamai's' (son-in-law) Diwali when gifts are given."

The most important amendment, however, needs to take place in the definition of dowry, which is left intact by the Dandavate bill. Case after case is struck down because lawyers are able to argue cleverly that the gifts were not "in consideration of marriage". In Ms. Chaddha's case also, the concerned magistrate dismissed the case on the grounds that the demand for a scooter made by her son-in-law Subhash Bhasin two days before her daughter Shashi Bala was burnt to death was "not in consideration of marriage" and therefore did not amount to dowry. No cognisance was taken of the fact that the demand for a scooter had started two days before the wedding and continued thereafter.

"These words, 'in consideration of marriage' must go from the definition of dowry," says Ms. Sarkar. "Any demand made to the girl or her family at any time should be made punishable." She admits that this is a "drastic" measure but one which is needed, given the havoc dowry is creating with the lives of young women.

Ms. Dandavate's Bill also increases the fine imposed on those held guilty. As the law stands today, they can be fined up to Rs. 5,000 along with imprisonment of up to six months. She has suggested a fine of "five thousand rupees or twice the amount of dowry, whichever is more."

Along with the fine, the jail sentence also needs to be enhanced. Says Ms. Sarkar, "Normally I'm against the principle of minimum punishment of imprisonment because today the approach should be rehabilitative. But in social offences like dowry, I'm not sure that we shouldn't have it." She suggests, however, that a fine amounting to double the dowry as a minimum punishment would be far more effective deterrent, since the tendency of the judges — most of them are male and from the same socio-economic class as the accused — is to avoid sending the man to jail.

The ban on "public display" is a welcome provision of the Dandavate bill — the idea was borrowed from Pakistan — though here too the word "public" could be deleted. Since the families show the girl's dowry to relatives and neighbours inside the house, they will tend to argue that they never displayed the gifts publicly.

Subhadra Butalia is unhappy with the ceiling of Rs. 2,000 on dowry. "You are conceding the very principle of dowry. We are attacking the institution of dowry itself in marriage, whether the amount given is Rs. 2,000 or Rs. 20,000." According to her, there should be no exchange of gifts at all in consideration of marriage. Dowry deprives women of the right to inherit property which is now granted to them in law. "They do not get their share of property because parents feel they will get their share of dowry."

In the final analysis, Butalia is convinced, legislation cannot help. "Laws depend so much on interpretation and the way judges look at a problem. When you talk about abolishing dowry, most judges react very negatively." This attitude is not just prevalent in judges but also in educated women themselves who otherwise believe that women should be treated as equals. Yet many do not agree about the abolition of dowry. The status of a new bride in a new home, they feel, is determined by the dowry she brings. "It is a total conditioning we've gone through and one which is very difficult to break."

Adequate thought now needs to be given by women's groups and concerned individuals and organisations on the legislative measure necessary to fight the menace of dowry, given the experience of recent years. Suggestions should be made in good time to the government before it moves the new Bill in Parliament.

---

mother. On many an occasion she was also beaten up. On March 15, 1979, — nine months after the wedding — Subhash visited Satyarani and once again demanded a scooter. Two days later the girl was burnt to death. At that time she was in her sixth month of pregnancy.

The police registered a case under Section 302 of the Indian Penal Code against Subhash, his brother, Naresh, their mother, Krishnawanti, and their two sisters, Chanchal and Aruna. All five were arrested.

The accused maintain that Shashi Bala died of an accident. She had been watching T.V. that evening. Then she went in change her clothes. She bolted the kitchen from inside. While lighting the kerosene stove to make tea, her clothes caught fire, according to her in-laws.

Since a **barat** was passing outside at the time, the women members of the family claim, they had gone out to watch it. Subhash says he was in Mathura where he works as a Manager in the Bata Company and Naresh was sound asleep in the adjoining room. That is why they did not hear Shashi Bala's screams. A certain neighbour, Raj Kumar is believed to have heard her cries. He came rushing upto the kitchen and gave the bolted door a kick. It flew open. When he saw the girl burning, he rushed out again, ostensibly to get a taxi. When he returned, the girl was dead. So goes the defence story.

If Shashi Bala was burnt in the kitchen, as is being maintained by the boy's family, who brought the body out into the courtyard, where the mother and, later, the police found it? The explanation of the boy's family is that when neighbour Sham Lal saw the body burning, he took off his pyjamas and with them dragged the body out into the courtyard. Incidentally, there is no record in the police diary of pyjamas having been found near the body; there was, however, a half-burnt broom.

Mrs. Chaddha argues that even if five kilos of wood were burning, to move it from one place to another would require more than a pyjama. This was, after all, a woman weighing at least 45 kilos.

According to the post mortem report, the girl died of first and second degree burns from head to toes with "total burnt area 100 per cent." Her hair smelt of kerosene. In a small space — and the Gandhinagar flat of Subhash Bhasin is a two room affair — even if milk burns, its smell pervades the whole house. This was, after all, the stench of human flesh. In the adjoining room, Naresh neither smelt anything nor heard the sounds of the girl's screams. The girl was completely burnt out with hardly any eyes or mouth left — the condition her mother saw her in later that night. No effort was made by the family to call a doctor or to rush her to hospital.

Furthermore, if her body was dragged out to the courtyard as the defence has maintained, this action should have left some marks on the floor. The police photographs taken that night show none.

The door of the kitchen which the deceased was supposed to have locked from inside comprised an important piece of evidence. This was only sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory months after the event.

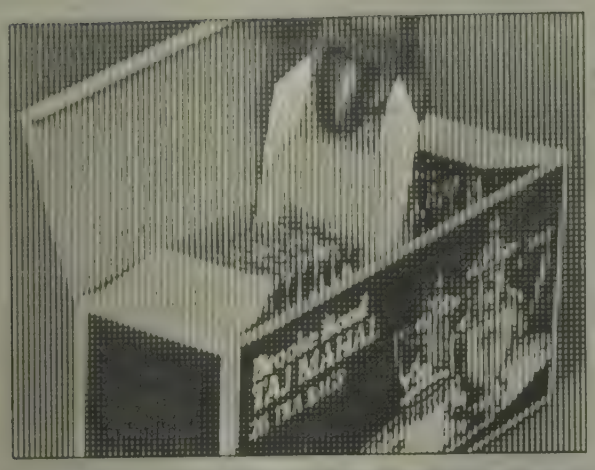
The questions just go on and on. The mother asks them — of the police, the Crime Branch and the C.B.I. The answers are not forthcoming.

For two months the accused were lodged in Tihar Jail, and the Sessions Court refused them bail. Then an application for bail was made in the High Court of M. L. Jain for the three women

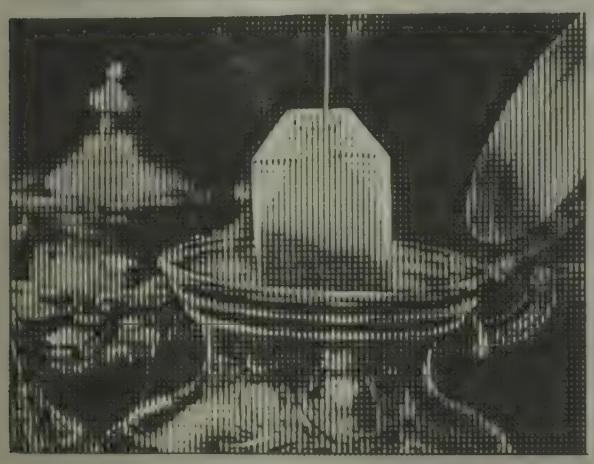
Continued on Page 58

Brooke Bond presents

a great new way to good tea



just pick...



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Niki Grover

POPULARISING INDIAN ARTS AND CRAFTS

Here is one young woman who is really going places — and I mean that literally and otherwise. Niki Grover, 23, is a lot of things — widely travelled, intelligent, interesting and obviously talented; one can predict with a fair amount of confidence that she'll make her mark. Niki is the third and six-month-old addition to Prafulla Barota and Associates, which to quote Niki, "functions as a gallery to supply arts and crafts to State Governments and commercial projects in India and abroad."

It was set up with the conviction that "modern urban society must build in harmony with its surroundings if its rich tradition and culture is to survive. And this necessarily calls for increasing use of arts and crafts in interior designs. Prafulla Barota and Associates offer consultancy and advice in this field, drawing on the knowledge of the various arts and crafts available, and the extensive information on artists and artisans and their capabilities. They plan, interact, design, procure and supervise the installation of various art and craft objects like paintings, tapestry, ceramics, sculpture and carpets for homes, offices and hotels."

The women behind the name are Prafulla Dahanukar, practising artist and Chairperson of the Bombay Art Society who specializes in the design of murals in ceramic, glass, wood and stainless steel and has individually manned 21 painting shows, and Barota Malhoutra founder-member of the Shilpi Kendra who has been all over the country studying the varied traditions of Indian crafts.

For a brief personal sketch, Niki passed out from the Lawrence School, Sanawar, near Simla, and moved on to do her foundation course at the J. J School of Arts, Bombay. After a semester of Textile Design at J. J. she gave up in disgust and after a stiff battery of admission tests got into the National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad, which she described as a little bit of America transplanted. She did two semesters of textile designing, weaving and handicrafts at NID in a city steeped in all that is old and Indian. Then later, with the intention of joining her family's garment manufacturing firm as Fashion Designer, Niki left for Munich — the fashion centre of the world — for a 2½-year course in fashion design at the Meister Schule Fur Mode.

The course included fashion graphics, cutting, draping, live modelling, painting still life and nudes, organizing fashion fairs and commercial design. She found the school surprisingly conventional, bound in by examinations and term tests. Back in India, since her family garment firm had wound up, she joined a fashion export house at Thana as one of their designers, working with Indian fabrics. Designs were kept simple and casual and months went by with no changes being made besides a hemline raised an inch or a yoke gathered differently.

It soon got tedious and Niki thought up a new idea — she decided to start a fashion forecast magazine for small-scale garment manufacturers to give them some clues on which way the fashion vane was turned — what colours were in vogue, what designs would sell and what materials were preferred. Unfortunately it didn't work out — there was more work involved than Niki had bargained for. But for a 20-year-old to think in terms of publishing a magazine on her own requires more than an ordinary dose of confidence.

After this, for a while Niki went through a bad phase, trying desperately to fit into some kind of slot somewhere knowing that she would rebel if saddled with a 9 to 5 job. She was just "bumming around" when Barota Malhoutra, a family friend who had seen Niki's work, suggested that she join Prafulla Barota and Associates. Niki grabbed the offer and ever since has been irrevocably in love with her job. Few of us can say that with as much of a glow as Niki does. It's erratic and flexible — some days they work nights, and other days they're totally free and then there is the thrill of travel, people and places. It suits her to perfection.

Niki, Barota and Pratulla are negotiating projects for tourist complexes and hotels in the West and Middle East. What they do is to visit the site and judge for themselves which Indian arts and crafts pieces, either ethnic or contemporary, go best with the decor. Then they go back to the traditional craftsman in his village and place orders for the crafts pieces suggesting alterations in design to suit modern tastes, but retaining as much of the original components as possible. The remaining transactions are carried on between the Government, the craftsman and the client.

They're also negotiating with the Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh Governments for contracts to recreate medieval palaces in Oorcha, Gwalior and Mandu, and to construct Holiday Homes in Himachal Pradesh. Their kind of work involves intensive research so that the renovating and recreating that they do is in keeping with the style of the period. Long hours are spent in libraries, pouring over ancient, dust-laden records, looking for stray sentences that would be of use to them. Another project that is in the air is the construction of a tent city at Khajuraho for the Annual Festival of Arts. This event attracts a large tourist crowd and the tent city done up using the tribal arts of the Bhils of the Bastar area and the Gonds and Marias will be this year's main attraction.

What most of us are unaware of is that several traditional Indian crafts face extinction. One such craft is the Patola work of the Pattan weavers. There is only one family left which continues to weave Patola sarees, each of which takes a year to complete. It is back breaking work, which requires patience and skill. The younger family members are unwilling to take it up because it is not lucrative enough. So with this generation of weavers, one intricate Indian craft will die out, relatively unnoticed. Another is the Pethapur block printing work which was patronized during the days of the British Raj. There were blocks that depicted entire cities. Now, however, since people don't seem to appreciate the craft and its intricacy enough to pay well for it, the printers have made their blocks cruder and less elaborate. Foreigners have realized the value of ancient blocks and since there is no embargo on their export have been shipping them out of the country with little difficulty. Prafulla Barota and Associates also intend to work for the revival of these neglected arts and crafts

Minu Cherian

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PRIZED BONSAI

Versatile Jyoti Parekh from Bombay keeps herself engaged in various activities — she runs cookery classes, makes a variety of handicrafts and is a dedicated bonsai grower. She is the author of "Tropical Bonsai," a book on miniature trees and landscapes. "Nothing gives better relaxation to the tired mind than these little trees and landscapes brought indoors," says Jyoti.

This year Jyoti participated as India's representative in the World Bonsai Exhibition and Convention held in Osaka, Japan, for the first time. Bonsai experts were invited from several countries. And about 850 of the best bonsai from all over Japan were on view. Some of these were 100 to 200 years old, lovingly tended from generation to generation. All prized possessions!

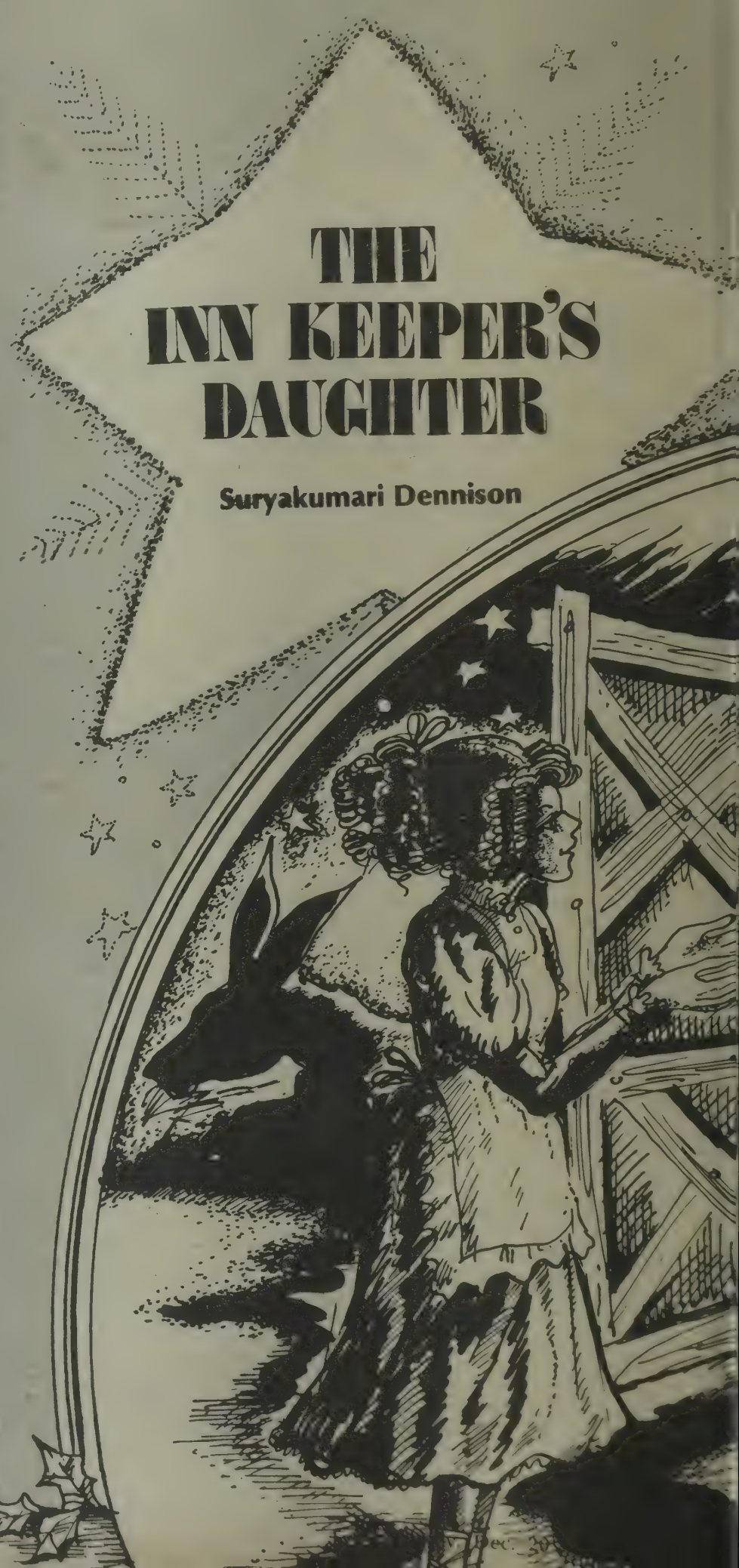
Jyoti exhibited a miniature banyan tree clinging to a rock with exposed roots and the aerial roots shoing too (right).

The other picture shows a miniature landscape created by her with the evergreen juniper tree, dotted with tiny hills, houses and bridge.

Photographs : Anil Deve

THE INN KEEPER'S DAUGHTER

Suryakumari Dennison



REBEKAH knew that her father was pleased. His face had the smug expression it always wore when business was good, and today, the inn was full to overflowing. Men and women kept arriving — singly, in couples, in groups of three or four, and all of them were greeted by the in-keeper's jovial voice welcoming them to "the finest inn in all Bethlehem." Occasionally, during rare intervals between arrivals, the inn-keeper would complain to no one in particular that he had too many people on his hands and too much to do. This grumbling, of course, fooled no one, for everyone could see the inn-keeper's delight as the crowds poured in. Rebekah stood at a safe distance observing but unobserved.

She had ceased to meet and entertain guests at the inn ever since the day, two years ago, when she'd overheard two of them discussing her. She hadn't meant to hear the conversation, but the two women were talking in loud, high pitched voices and the door of their room was wide open. Rebekah, walking past on an errand for her father, had stopped short as one of the women said — "What a very ugly daughter the inn-keeper has!" The other woman had tittered and replied, "Yes, a perfect fright."

Rebekah would never forget the agony of that moment as, errand forgotten, she had rushed to her mother for reassurance. Only nine years old at that time, Rebekah had never worried about her looks till then, but suddenly they assumed momentous importance and she felt that only her mother could restore her badly shaken confidence in herself.

Rebekah's mother was one of those people whom a life of luxury had turned into an indolent hypochondriac. She liked nothing better than to recline on a couch all day, with her maid in constant attendance. She also had a personal physician whose business it was (and one for which he was well paid) to spend long hours with the lady and listen sympathetically to her recital of fancied ailments.

When Rebekah burst into her room she was in the midst of convincing her physician that she suffered from a certain dread malady that was being talked about a great deal. The physician was about to assure her that it certainly looked as if she was right when the door flew open and Rebekah ran straight to her mother's lap.

"Mother, am I ugly?" was all Rebekah said as she looked up into her mother's face.

Rebekah's mother had looked down at her daughter's face as if studying a curious insect and said coolly, "Of course you are, my dear, very ugly indeed." She had turned back almost immediately to her physician with a "Where were we?" and had not even noticed Rebekah creeping out of the room in abject misery.

Since that day, Rebekah had suffered. She had suffered from her mother's neglect of her; she had suffered from the sneers of those who were ostensibly her friends; she had suffered from well-meaning relatives who asked her father in her presence — "Who will want to marry her?" Above all, she had suffered from her father's kindly attempts to show her he didn't mind her face; she could not bear the pity of his eyes when he looked at her.

It never occurred to Rebekah that her friends and relatives were to be blamed. She looked into the mirror every day, cursed the image in it and told herself that people were quite right to shrink from her. She was ugly. She hated her too-broad forehead and her over-large nose; she disliked her thick lips and her uneven teeth and most of all she deplored her sallow complexion and her dull, lifeless hair. Her eyes, which might have been a redeeming feature, being large and lustrous, were lost in the general unattractiveness surrounding them.

For two years Rebekah's only companions had been the men who worked at the inn. They didn't mind her looks and treated her with the respect due to her as the inn-keeper's daughter. Being kindly men, they sensed her loneliness and often let her join their circle when they sat around a fire in the evenings, after a hard day's work.

Having listened to their talk night after night, Rebekah, at eleven, knew far more of the political situation in her country than most Jewish girls of her age. So it was that on this afternoon, as she stood watching her father's inn fill up, Rebekah knew that these unprecedented crowds in Bethlehem were due to Caesar's decree that everyone should go to his home town to be enrolled for the census that was being conducted. While fully aware that Caesar's decree meant good business for her father, Rebekah could not but sympathise with the poor for whom the journey to Bethlehem was full of hardships. She was able to see their side because it was with the poor that the inn-hands identified.

The previous night, the conversation around the fire had been exciting.

Reuben, one of the stable-boys, had declared that Rome had gone too far. "We must strike

back," he had shouted, "We can't take such injustice lying down."

"If only we had someone, another Judas Maccabeus, to lead us into battle!" said David, a serving boy and one of the youngest of the company.

Old Eleazor, who had been at the inn since the days when Rebekah's grandfather had been inn-keeper, had counselled patience. "God will not let us suffer indefinitely; we must have patience," he had urged.

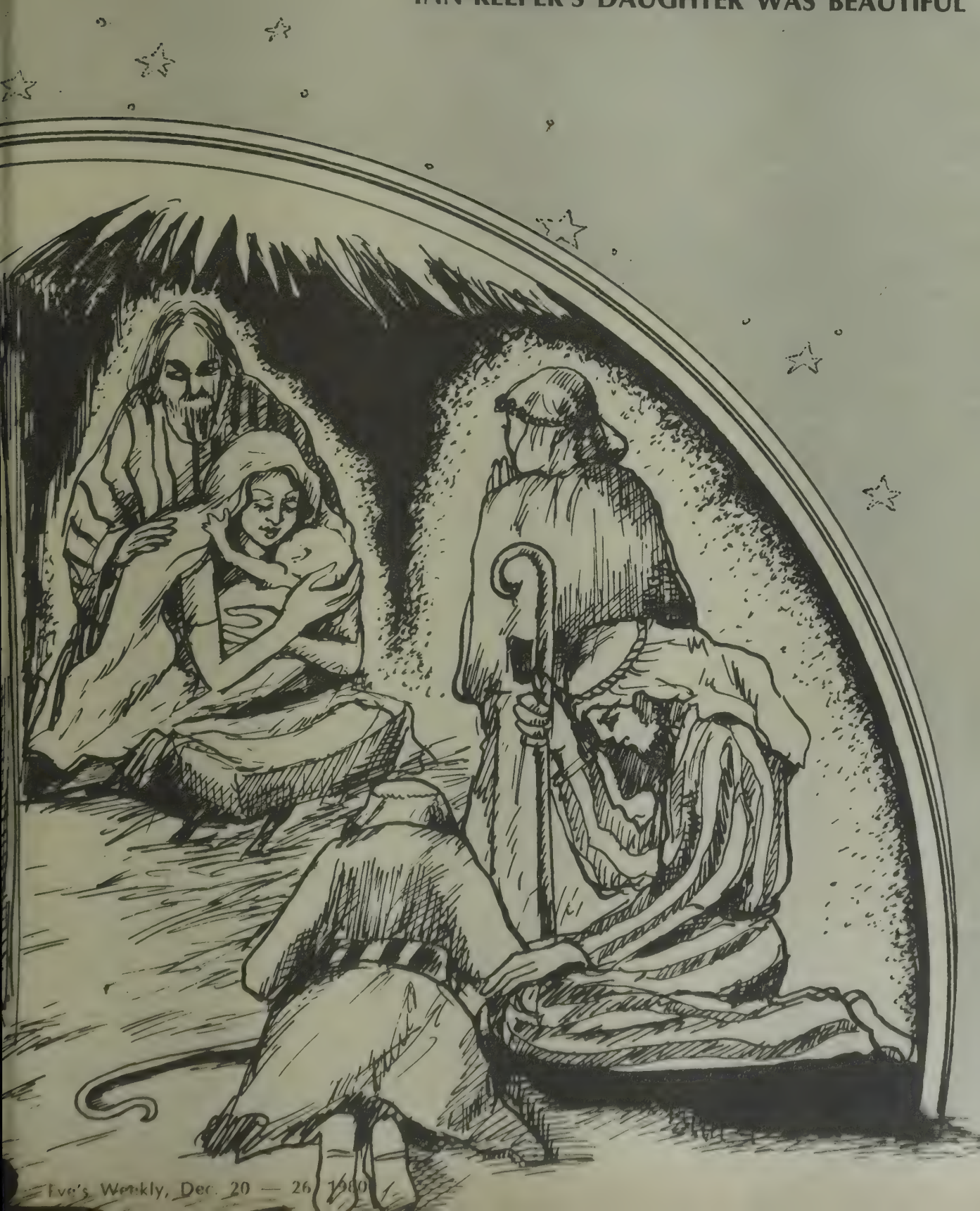
"But, Sir," Reuben had protested, "Don't you think God wants us to do something as well? We can't just wait."

There were roars of assent from the others, but Eleazor had said calmly, in a voice full of faith and certainty, "We must wait. Have you all forgotten the Messiah? When the Blessed one comes, our quarrel will be in his hands and I feel sure he will come very soon."

As Eleazor spoke, a hush fell over the gathering. Rebekah sat very still and thought about the Messiah. Of course, she had heard of him before, who hadn't? But he had always seemed a rather remote figure in the Prophetic Books. Now, suddenly, Eleazor's words had made him come alive, made him real — someone who might appear any moment.

That night, in bed, Rebekah tossed and turned, thinking of the Messiah's coming. "But", she asked herself, "does it really matter to me, if he topples old Augustus off his throne? What difference would it make to me If Rome were cast into the sea?" She supposed she should feel exultant at such a prospect. "Rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion," sang the Prophet, but she had to admit that her own problems meant more to her than Israel's. What if the Messiah did vanquish Rome and exalt Israel? She would still be herself — ugly and unloved. She had cried herself to sleep.

EVERYONE SAID SHE WAS UGLY AND IT MADE HER MISERABLE, BUT NOW, LOOKING DOWN AT THE SMILING BABY SHE WAS CONSCIOUS OF A GREAT JOY, AND THE SHEPHERDS GATHERED ROUND WONDERED WHY THEY HAD NEVER NOTICED THAT THE INN-KEEPER'S DAUGHTER WAS BEAUTIFUL



It was evening. The inn-keeper had put up a huge yellow board with "No Room" on it, in large black letters. He stood beside it for a while and then turned to go indoors. At that moment, Rebekah saw a couple approaching the inn and pointed them out to her father. The inn-keeper waited for them to come up. This took some time as the woman was seated on a slow moving donkey which the man was leading.

The woman's face was completely hidden by a somewhat faded blue veil, but Rebekah could see the man clearly enough. He was about forty, dark and bearded and clad in coarse brown garments. He looked completely exhausted but held himself with dignity as he addressed the inn-keeper.

"Sir," he began, "I see your board, but you cannot turn us away. My wife is fainting with weariness. .."

"You look ready to faint yourself, my good man," the inn-keeper cut in. "You shall have some soup and then go on your way. We have no room to spare."

"Sir," the man pleaded, "Do not send us away; we have journeyed far and cannot go any further."

"You must try another inn," said the inn-keeper firmly. "There's one quite near here."

"I've tried that one, Sir," the man said, "They are full up too."

"Oh! So you went there first, did you?" the inn-keeper said rather angrily. "Had you come here first, perhaps.. ."

The conversation seemed to be going on interminably. Rebekah was listening intently to it when she suddenly realised that the woman's veil had fallen back over her head exposing her face completely. Rebekah was stunned. It was the face of a girl barely a few years older than herself and it was a face of beauty such as she had never dreamt existed. It was a face she could look at for ever and never get tired of gazing.

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THE INN-KEEPER'S DAUGHTER

She was still staring raptly when she heard her father say, "Well, if you belong to the House of David and your wife is expecting a baby tonight, I suppose I can't turn you away. I can only offer you a stable, will that do?"

"Oh Sir, you are very kind," the man said. "Of course, a stable will suit us, won't it Mary?" (turning to his wife).

The woman's eyes were glazed with weariness, but her answer came readily and cheerfully in a low, musical voice. "It will be very comfortable, Joseph. My son will be born there tonight."

As the couple and the donkey moved away in the direction of the stable, Rebekah thought, "So her name is Mary; that means bitterness. How inappropriate for her! What sorrow could one so lovely ever know?"

But she soon forgot these speculations in the sudden recollection that a baby had been mentioned. A baby was to be born in the stable that night. "My son," Mary had said. How could she be sure it would be a boy? Anyway, a baby was a baby. How long it was since she'd played with a child or cuddled an infant! She was determined to see Mary's baby.

III

It was past midnight when Rebekah slipped out of her room, slid softly down the stairs and quietly let herself out of the front door. To her amazement the courtyard was bathed in a glowing light. Gazing skywards, Rebekah saw that this radiance emanated from a single star of dazzling brightness. She also noticed that the star seemed to be poised directly above the stable for which she was headed. Awed as she was by this strange phenomenon, Rebekah was too intent on her mission to give it more thought. Throwing aside a candle she had brought along, she began to run towards the stable which stood at the end of the courtyard at some distance from the Inn.

As she neared it, Rebekah saw that the entrance was blocked by a group of chattering men whom she recognised as local shepherds who often came to the inn to sell their flock. The shepherds, recognising her in turn, made way for her as she pushed her way through them.

"He's here," they told her as she moved forward. "He's all wrapped up like they told us."

Scarcely listening, Rebekah edged her way to the front of the group and found herself staring at Joseph, Mary and the baby.

She shrank back then, suddenly abashed at finding herself face to face with strangers and more than ever conscious of her ugly face. She was just contemplating retreat when Mary said tenderly, "You wish to see my son, dear; do come close to him."

Joseph smiled encouragingly and Rebekah moved forward, as one in a dream, to the crib where the baby lay. She found herself looking down at the tiniest bundle of humanity imaginable. He was all wrapped up but his face was exposed and his arms were free. Rebekah knelt beside him and saw him looking at her. She looked back, not daring to breathe. Then he was smiling, smiling at her, smiling for her, even as he extended tiny arms towards her.

Unconscious of the watching parents and the kneeling shepherds, unaware of the silence all around her, Rebekah picked him up and hugged him to herself. She was conscious of a joy so great that she thought her heart must burst for sheer happiness. She was in a world of her own where only she and the baby existed, a world in which loneliness and misery had no part. The shepherds watching Rebekah's face, asked one another wonderingly how they had never noticed that the inn-keeper's daughter was so beautiful.

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Beginning from January 1981, the feature will be published once a month along with the coupons. All you need to do is to cut and keep the coupons published every month. Out of the 12 coupons in the year, a minimum of 10 coupons collected will entitle the sender to participate in the lucky draw to be held by Eve's Weekly around January 1982 after the 12th feature has been published.

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Start collecting your coupons from the issue of January 24, 1981. A minimum of 10 coupons out of serial numbers 1 to 12 should be sent **in one lot** to The Editor, Eve's Weekly Ltd., Peraj Building, Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay 400 023.

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Third Prize: A Digital Clock Radio. Or, Rs. 750 in cash.

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Third Prize: A Standard Concepta Super Deluxe Television. Or, Rs. 3000 in cash.

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* Cold recipe: Any recipe (Sweet or otherwise) that's kept in the fridge and eaten cold.

THE LAW:

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

The law affects our lives much more than we tend to think. It pays to be aware of our existing rights, as well as the rights we have to fight for

ADOPTION: the need for secular law

Rita Rahimtoola

A fat, contented baby girl plays with a chained puppy on a city pavement. Her parents who run an improvised tea-stall keep an eye on her as she crawls to the edge of the pavement. But they don't have to, for she is the cynosure of a dozen pair of eyes belonging to their customers. Her "uncles" bring Radha gifts and play with her. Radha, who enjoys so much attention from her extended family, is a very lucky child indeed. Even though she has no home other than the pavement, she is protected, cared for and well-nourished.

Her good luck began when as a babe-in-arms, her unwed mother waded into the sea with her, ready to cast the piteous frail bundle into the churning waters interspersed with sharp jagged rocks. She was stopped by a woman who had come to the seashore to perform her morning ablutions. The unwed mother and the childless woman met by chance and a life was saved. The baby exchanged hands. The unwed mother was free to return to her distant village without taking with her the evidence of her indiscretion or the memory of feeble arms and legs flaying the water, and the childless woman returned to her husband and the tea-stall, bearing her bundle of joy.

The tea-stall couple is illiterate. They do not know that at the very time when they fulfilled their need for a child, nurturing it with love and care and being rewarded with the sight of a young life unfolding, their representatives in Parliament in Delhi had thrown out the Adoption Bill. The year was 1978.

The simple tea-stall couple was doing what has come naturally to human beings for thousands of years. Yet in India we do not have a law to give legal recognition to an action which fulfils a deep human need.

In a country like ours where there are millions of unwanted children, not only does adoption fulfil an individual's urge but also serves a worthwhile social objective. We have at least a million children who are officially termed destitute. Of these the less unfortunate are being brought up in the emotionally sterile atmosphere of institutions. Millions more are left to fend for themselves working in low-paid jobs. The worst off ones are those who have got into the clutches of criminals and are exploited by them for anti-social activities. These children are used for thieving, begging, house-breaking, smuggling, sexual perversions, etc. They have no chance growing up as decent human beings and law abiding citizens.

In India we have the paradoxical situation where on one hand young infants are either murdered or abandoned by parents who will not or cannot care for them, and on the other we have childless women who go from sadhu to sadhu to be saved from the curse of barrenness. Indian society places a high premium on fecundity. Not having children voluntarily is exceptional in India. For most Indians, personal goals are connected with the development and growth of the family rather than of oneself.

The conditions are tailor-made where a wider practice of adoptions would serve both the individual and society. Hence for the last thirty years our social workers and others have been clamouring for a law of adoption.

What is adoption? In a legal sense adoption is a device which transfers to a person all the rights and duties of a parent in relation to the child adopted, and to the child, the status of being a child of the family.

To give an example, an adopted son would inherit the property of the man who adopted him, just as a natural born son would. In the absence of a legal adoption, the child would have no inheritance rights even if he has been brought up as a son, unless a specific bequest is made to him by will.

In the absence of a law of adoption, nobody can adopt or be adopted. In India there is no law of adoption under which Muslims, Christians and Parsis can adopt children. There is a law of adoption only for Hindus and even this law has great limitations.

HINDUS AND ADOPTION

Adoption was customary among Hindus since early times. "He whom his father and mother give to another as his son, provided that the donee have no issue...is considered as a son given..." said Manu. For both religious and secular reasons, a male Hindu who had no sons, grandson or great-grandson could adopt provided he had no male descendants and he could adopt only **one** son. A Hindu woman was denied this right to adopt a child. She could adopt a son with her husband's consent, and, in certain parts of India, after his death she could adopt a son if he had authorised her to do so.

The traditional Hindu law on adoption was codified with some changes as the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act, 1956. Under this Act, the conditions for a valid adoption are set out. Unless an adoption is carried out as per the provisions of this Act, the adoption is void, and the adopted child does not obtain any rights or privileges in the adoptive family.

WHO CAN ADOPT

A male Hindu can adopt a child provided that:

a) he is of sound mind;

b) he is not a minor;

c) his wife, if he is married, consents to the adoption;

d) he does not have a Hindu child, grandchild or great grandchild (by blood relationship or adoption) living, of the same sex as the child he wishes to adopt; and

e) if the child is a female, she is at least twenty-one years younger than him.

Now a female Hindu can also adopt a child provided that:

a) she is of sound mind;

b) she is not a minor;

c) she is unmarried or a divorcee or a widow, or the wife a certified lunatic or the wife of a person who has either ceased to be a Hindu or has renounced the world;

d) she does not have a Hindu child, grandchild or great grandchild (by blood relationship or adoption) living, of the same sex as the child she wishes to adopt; and

e) if the child is a male, she is at least twenty-one years older than him.

WHO CAN BE ADOPTED

Only a Hindu child who has not been adopted by any one else can be adopted. A married person cannot be adopted (unless there is a custom or usage applicable to the parties which permits this). The child should not have completed the age of fifteen years (unless there is a custom which permits an older child to be adopted).

WHO CAN GIVE IN ADOPTION

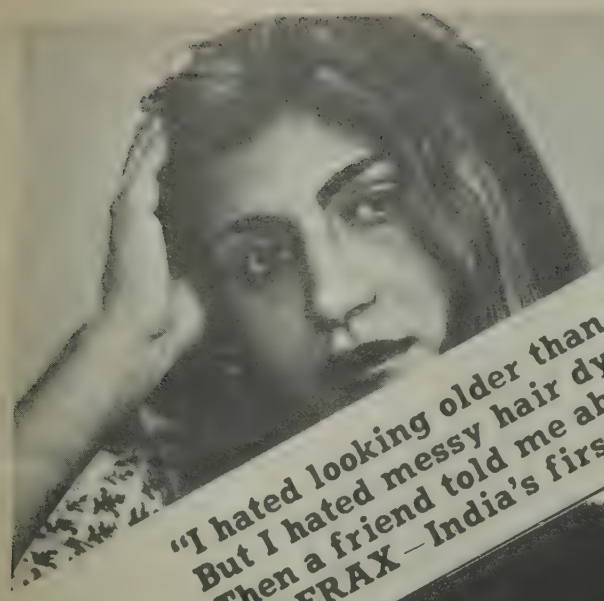
Only the father or mother or guardian of the child has the right to give the child in adoption. Where both parents are living, the father alone has the right to give in adoption, but the mother's consent is necessary. If the father is dead, has renounced the world or has ceased to be a Hindu or is a certified lunatic, the mother has the right to give the child in adoption.

Where both the father and mother are dead or have renounced the world, or are certified lunatics or have abandoned the child, or the child's parentage is not known, the guardian of the child may give the child in adoption with the previous permission of the Court to any person including the guardian himself.

The court will give its permission only if it is satisfied that the adoption is for the welfare of the child.

EFFECTS OF ADOPTION

An adopted child is deemed to be the child of his or her adoptive father or mother for all purposes and all the ties of the



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ADOPTION: The need for secular law

child with the family of its birth are deemed to be severed from the date of adoption and replaced by those created by the adoption in the adoptive family.

However, the child cannot marry any one whom he or she could not have married if he or she would have continued to live in the family of his or her birth. Also any property vested in the child before the adoption would continue to do so, including the obligations, if any, attached to this ownership. Further, by the adoption, the adopted child would not divest any person of any estate that vested in him prior to the adoption. An adoption does not deprive the adoptive parents of the right to dispose of their property by transfer or by will.

ADOPTION BY NON-HINDUS

Since there is no law of adoption for non-Hindus, they can only be appointed as guardians of the children they wish to bring up. Since even Hindus can adopt only if they do not have a natural born child, grandchild, or great grandchild of the same sex, they too must take advantage of the law of guardianship if they want to bring up an additional child of the same sex.

However, guardianship is not equivalent to adoption. A person can be appointed the guardian of a minor under the Guardians and Wards Act 1980 by a court order provided the court is satisfied that it is for the welfare of the child. A guardian has control over the person and property of his ward, but a guardian does not stand in the position of a parent to the ward; nor does the ward acquire the rights and duties of a son or daughter in respect of the guardian. For example, a ward would not inherit the property of his guardian unless the guardian makes a specific bequest to the ward by will.

Hence those who cannot adopt children on account of the lack of an enabling law can have themselves appointed guardians by a court order. Next, they must make financial provision for the ward by leaving a specific bequest by will, because if there is intestate succession, the ward has no rights of inheritance.

Parsis and Christians have full capacity to dispose of their entire estate by will. Muslims can bequeath only one-third of their property by will but there is no restriction on gifts or on making a ward a beneficiary of a **wakf** which is a sort of trust.

A MUCH-NEEDED REFORM

Had the Adoption of Children Bill 1972 been passed, it would have provided a uniform adoption law in the country for all communities. This much needed bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on June 1, 1972. It was referred to a Joint Committee of the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha. The Committee held 57 sittings in all and heard evidence tendered by 147 witnesses. The Committee also received 144 memoranda containing views, comments and suggestions from several individuals and organisations.

After much deliberation, the Committee suggested certain changes in the Bill. The revised Bill was then introduced in the Rajya Sabha in 1978 by the then Law Minister, Mr. Shanti Bhushan. There was vehement opposition in the House and the Law Minister withdrew the Bill. As the "Times of India" pointed out, "It will be a great pity. . .if the Bill is shelved for a prolonged period yet again; at stake are not really the rights of any community but the well-being of over a million children. . ."

Yet this is precisely what has happened. The bill has been shelved once again, one does not know for how long.

Why was this Bill been so controversial? Why does it evoke such a hostile reaction? What are its provisions?

The Bill permits any person who has completed the age of 25 years and is of sound mind, to adopt a child. The person adopting the child must be at least twenty-one years older than the child. If a married person is adopting a child, both husband and wife must adopt the child jointly. Only a child who is under eighteen years of age and unmarried can be adopted. Consent of the child's parent or guardian is required. If the child is in the care of an institution, all the persons in charge of the management of the institution must give their consent. However, the court can dispense with the consent of any person including a parent, who has been guilty of abandoning, neglecting or persistently ill-treating the child. The adoption order has to be made by the Court, which has first to satisfy itself that adoption will be for the welfare of the child. The Court when making the order may impose such terms and conditions as it thinks fit on the adopter, including taking a bond from the adopter to make provision for the child.

From the date of the adoption order, the child is deemed to be the child of the adopter and it acquires the rights and duties of a child born in lawful wedlock to the adopter.

The court is given powers by the Bill to look into any case where the adopted child is neglected, subjected to cruel treatment, made to live by begging, is discriminated against in favour of other brothers or sisters or in any other matter concerning the physical and moral well being of the child.

Inter alia, the Bill provides for a Licensing Authority for Adoption Institutions in each State and the licensing of social welfare institutions to make arrangements for adoptions. It also makes possible provisional adoptions by fit persons domiciled outside India, enabling them to take the child out of India for adoption in their own country under their own laws.

Recently, in Bombay, the Bal Varsha Pratisthan (Year of the Child Foundation) set up under the Presidentship of Shrimati Shanti Sadiq Ali, set up a legislation sub-committee under the chairmanship of Mrs. Justice Sujata Manohar. The Sub-Committee on legislation has reviewed legislation pertaining to children to examine whether children obtain adequate protection under the existing laws.

On the law of adoption and guardianship, the Sub-Committee has made the following observations: "The Committee is deeply conviced that a child can develop fully and grow up to be a mature and responsible citizen only in the atmosphere of a home and a family. A child needs not merely physical comforts, but also love, affection and understanding for its proper development. Hence institutions and orphanages, however well run they may be, cannot take the place of a family. In all advanced countries, therefore, there is a greater emphasis on the placement of such children in private homes rather than in the institutions. It is, therefore, necessary that there should be an adequate legal provision for the adoption of children, for their foster-care and guardianship.

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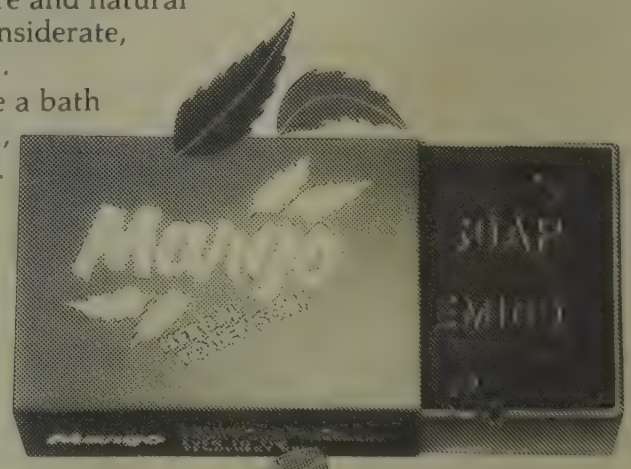

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by Don Tobin

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HERBERT SAID HE'D BE HOME BY SEVEN – AND IT'S AFTER EIGHT!
WHEN HE'S OUT PLAYING GOLF WITH HIS CRONIES HE LOSES ALL SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY!
HE NEVER GIVES THE LEAST THOUGHT TO ME! HE ONLY COMES HOME BECAUSE HE'S HUNGRY!
COME ON NOW –
IT'S TRUE! TO HIM I'M JUST A COOK AND A MAID! I'LL BET HE'S EVEN FORGOTTEN MY NAME!
I'M HOME!
NOW BE SWEET TO HIM AND YOU'LL FIND OUT HOW WRONG YOU ARE!
I'M STARVED, MABEL! TELL WHAT'S-HER-NAME TO BRING MY DINNER!
?
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THE LITTLE WOMAN

ADOPTION : The need for a secular law

"There is a basic difference between adoption and guardianship (or foster-care). A child who is adopted becomes a member of the adoptive family. It acquires all legal rights and responsibilities that flow from being a member of the adoptive family. Thus it acquires the rights of inheritance, maintance, etc. It also gets the responsibility of maintaining the members of its adoptive family to the same extent as any other person similarly situated, who is born in that family. In contrast, a ward does not become a part of the family of his guardian. The guardian is merely entrusted with the care and custody of the ward till the ward attains majority (age of 21 under the Guardians and Wards Act). Thereafter the relationship of guardian and ward comes to an end. The child acquires no rights in the guardian's family or to his estate if the guardian dies. Hence it is preferable that the child should be adopted rather than placed in guardianship.

The Sub-Committee has stated that there is "urgent need" for suitable legislation in the area of adoption. It has found the Adoption of Children Bill 1972 as amended by the Joint Committee of Parliament acceptable with certain important modifications which relate mainly to the procedures of adoption.

The Sub-Committee has also recommended special provisions regarding adoption by Muslims. These provide that where the person adopting a child is a Muslim, the adopted child will continue to bear the name and surname of his natural father if known, and the child will inherit through its natural parents and not through the adoptive ones. The adoptive parents may however, if they wish, bequeath to their adopted child by will, a share in their estate not exceeding one-third of the estate. Either or both of the adoptive parents may make an irrevocable will in favour of the adopted child bequeathing to him a share in their estate not exceeding one-third, after their death. The adoptive parents may during their life time make a gift in favour of their adopted child of up to half their property.

These special recommendations for Muslims have been made by the Sub-Committee because it is said that the Bill is meeting with so much opposition because it interferes with personal laws, mainly of the Muslims.

Orthodox Muslims base their objection to adoption on a verse in the Quran which is interpreted to show that Islam had repudiated the old custom, which existed until then in Arabia, of adoption. Adoption, they say, is prohibited by Muslim law and hence the Adoption Bill should preclude Muslims from its purview. However some Muslim scholars interpret this verse differently. They say it does not prohibit adoption but classifies it as an act to which religion is indifferent, that is, it is an act which is neither obligatory, recommended nor prohibited. Adoption (restricted to cases where parents are unknown) is permitted in Somalia by Family Law (1975), Article 110. But by and large, Muslim countries do not recognise adoption.

It would be unfair to say that all Muslims in India or an overwhelming majority of them are opposed to the Adoption Bill. All that can be said is that those opposed to the Bill are more organised and vocal in their protests than those who are not.

It would be unfair to say that Muslims alone are against the Adoption Bill. Opposition to the Bill comes from those sections in all communities — Hindus, Parsis, Muslims and Christians — who are opposed to the principle of secularism, who do not believe in man's brotherhood with man and who make invidious distinctions of caste, creed and community. Resistance to the Bill is on the grounds that traditional inheritance laws would be interfered with, as the adopted child would inherit the parents' property to the same extent as a child born in lawful wedlock would. Behind it all is the fear that "purity" of blood lines would not be maintained. Those who uphold caste barriers as sancrosanct do not want the Bill to be passed as it might induct "outsiders" into the group.

Such thinking is the real barrier to adoption, as even with an adoption law, social prejudices will prevent people from adopting children, and these have to be removed.

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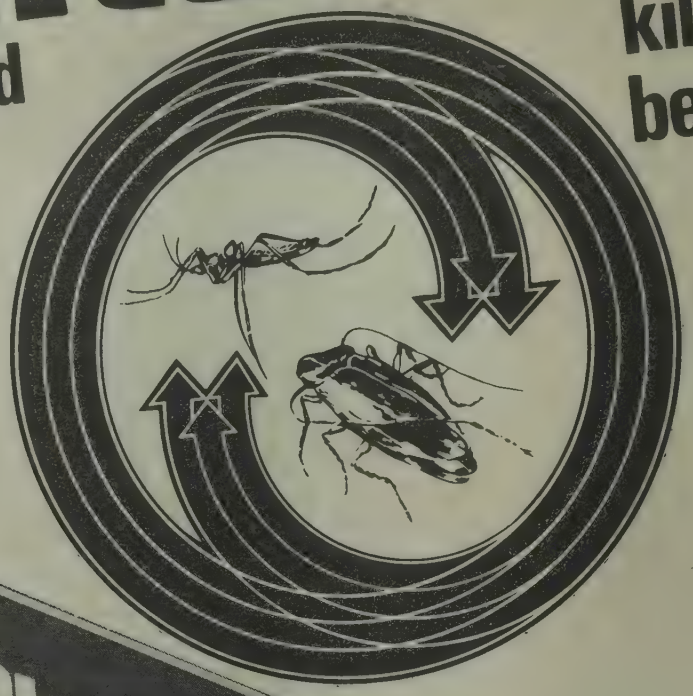
knocks down mosquitoes dead, seeks out and kills cockroaches, bed-bugs, ants.



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NOCIL

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Mrs. CLAUS

When Christmas comes everyone talks about Christmas trees and decorations and sweets (not so much this year, since sugar is very, very expensive) and dances and parties and Santa Claus.

But it is a bit sad that nobody gives any importance to Mrs. Santa Claus, the woman behind the much talked-about Mr. Santa Claus or Father Christmas.

So I decided to interview Mrs. Santa Claus.

I went all the way to the North Pole and I swear it was very, very cold and everything looked spotlessly white and clear.

The Clauses stay in a small, little cottage, all covered up with snow. I knocked on the door and it was opened by a plump old lady with pink cheeks.

"I am from the press," I said. "And I would like to interview Mrs. Santa Claus."

"Please come in," she said. "I am Mrs. Claus."

"Pleased to meet you," I said. "I thought it would be nice to feature you since you are the person behind the jovial Santa Claus."

"He is far from jovial," she said. "He has to put up a smiling face since no one would like to see a grumpy Santa Claus. But the world does not know about the difficulties we are facing."

"I always thought that Santa Claus was a very happy man," I said.

"He may be happy outside," she said. "But in this house he gets on my nerves."

"How is that?" I asked.

"Every night he returns home and tells me he is tired and cannot do any work in the house," she said. "And every morning he leaves early without doing any work since it is getting late for work.

"So I have to do all the work in the house," she continued. "And you must know how difficult it is to get servants in the North Pole."

"Sad," I said.

"Yes," she said. "I have to see that the house is neat and tidy since we get many Christmas visitors and my husband has to wear a fresh set of clothes every day since he travels a lot and his clothes get very dirty. I also stitch his outfit which is a very silly red suit."

"Yes," I said. "And have you any hobbies?"

"How can I ever have any hobbies?" she said. "All my time is utilised looking after my house and my husband. And I have also to make all the toys and sweets he distributes to all the children."

Just then Santa Claus came back and Mrs. Santa Claus introduced me to him. I was getting late. So I said: "Thank you, Mrs. Claus. I will send the photographer tomorrow to take your picture."

"Ho, ho, ho," said Mr. Santa Claus.

Marcellus

LET'S PLAY THE COLOUR GAME

Dinoo Vacha

A favourite trend in the fashion game — adapted here for our trendy salwar-khameez outfits. Try diagonal prints with two plain pattas in the same tone, or wear a button through band in a contrast colour — or a quilted yoke in candy yellow on panther pink!

Our current favourite — autumn leaves on a diagonal two tone dress — applique these in contrast satin over matt crepe dress! Or, try a wild print or even batik with one side plain! Go gay — go wild, play a game of colour all the way!

THE STORY SO FAR . . .

With a middling M.A behind her, Radhika was undecided about the future, when it suddenly dawned on her that the first thing to do, of course, was to get married and then think of a career, for a woman could never really get power outside the home and family. Her engagement to Ghanshyam, who was rich and goodlooking but rather dull, was temporarily interrupted by a letter from her brother-in-law Anand asking her to come and stay with them as he was worried about her sister Shanti's health. Radhika decided to go.

Almost immediately she felt the uneasy atmosphere in the house. Things were not well between Shanti and Anand. Akka still seemed to be grieving over the death of her six-year-old daughter Geetu, two years ago. But she seemed to derive some pleasure from the regular visits of the imperturbable, laconic Dr. Mohan Ram who had a rather annoying way of making Radhika feel very young and gauche. Then one afternoon Akka told Radhika to throw away the tea her husband had made for her, and she pretended to have finished it when Anand returned. Suddenly, Radhika found herself feeling frightened. . .

She didn't seem to be the only one. Akka too seemed scared. And she was in pain. Radhika raged at Raman for not trying to do something about it, but he only answered infuriatingly that she must have thrown splendid tantrums as a child. Anand confided to Radhika that he was worried about Akka . . . he feared she might commit suicide. A shocked Radhika felt she must talk to someone, and almost instinctively thought of Raman. He arranged to pick her up the next day on his way into town.

But Raman dismissed the suicide theory. Akka had once declared in his and Anand's hearing that she despised suicide, as an easy way out. On the way back they saw Anand, his arm round a woman disappearing into a grove of trees, and Raman disclosed to a distressed Radha that Anand was a known philanderer

Then one day, after promising to accompany his son to a movie in the township, Anand backed out saying he had a lot of backlog to catch up on and insisted that the others go. He would take care of Akka who was unwell. While Radhika was watching the film with Ravi, she got an uneasy feeling and decided to go home.

The house was in complete darkness and a hysterical Akka let her in, moaning, "I don't want to die. . . . ." There was a strong smell of gas, but no one appeared to know what exactly had happened. Raman arrived minutes later in response to a call put through by Akka earlier. The following day everything seemed normal and Radhika was seriously contemplating returning home. But Raman requested her to stay on.

The days that followed were peaceful and happy, Akka even talking about her dead daughter, assuring Radhika she didn't grieve over her, chatting lightheartedly about taking up writing again. And the next day she was dead — of an overdose of barbituates. In her diary she had recorded her fear of Anand, and an empty bottle of sleeping tablets which he admitted to having bought for Akka as usual, was found in his cupboard with only his finger prints on it, and the prescription was found to have been forged. Soon after, Anand was arrested.

NOW READ ON. . .

It was Amma's breakdown that, ironically enough, kept me going now. Akka's death had been bad enough, but Anand's arrest shattered her completely. I had my hands full coping with her, and with Ravi, who wanted to know all the facts and refused to be put off with any evasions. It was a relief when Dada came and persuaded Amma and Ravi to go back to Bombay. That left Dada with the enigma of Anand. Dada, confident that he could deal with any situation, found himself helpless here. Anand had retreated into a resolute silence; he would neither explain nor deny anything. He was willing to talk about anything but the one thing that so vitally mattered to his own self. I did not try to meet Anand, but one day I went to see Rohini. She came out to me, hostility plain on her face. I found myself tongue-tied. What could I say to her? It was she who spoke first. "He hasn't done it," she said. "She killed herself, he had nothing to do with it. Do you realise what you have all done? You've put a noose round his neck. They'll hang him, you know. Hang him."

Hanged by the neck until you are dead. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth... that's justice. A man has done wrong, he must be punished. We're engaged, Radhu, Anand and I. The neck snaps, they say, and the man dies instantly. A quick, merciful death. No, no mercy here. Only justice. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. . .

The tears came when I reached home. Home? We, Dada and I, had now moved into Ram Mohan's home as Anand's father and brother had arrived. Ram Mohan saw me come in. I went past him, threw myself on the bed and gave way to tears. Maybe they were the first adult tears

PART SEVEN

ships that pass

Shashi Deshpande

I had shed, because I had not known till then that tears could be so painful.

He was sitting by the bed when I came out of it. "All right?" he asked. I nodded. "I can't forgive them for what they've done to you," he said, speaking very softly. "You've changed... you've lost something . . ."

I knew what he meant. I looked back at the girl who had imagined that she had solved the conundrum of her life by deciding to get married. I had thought of my life as a piece of plasticine I could shape any way I wanted. Now I knew it was the other way round. . . it's we who are shaped by what happens to us.

"Where's all your fighting spirit gone?" he asked me with a small smile. "It's not over, you know."

"What do you mean?"

Without answering me he got up and began to pace up and down. "There's something wrong somewhere. . .you know how you have a feeling sometimes. . .but I just can't get at it. My mind. . . it's like when a car gets stuck in sand. I'm getting deeper, in, but the wheels just won't move forwards. The facts, they keep going round and round. Shanti. . .for some reason she was scared of Anand, she hinted at that often enough. Anand. . .he wanted to marry Rohini, he's told me so since. But do we deduce from this that Anand killed Shanti?"

"And yet suicide," I said. "How can it be that? Why, just the last day," and how long ago that seemed now, "she was speaking of her plans for the future. Surely no one planning suicide would do that! She said she'd begun writing and she was hoping she could go on and do something about it. . ."

"Writing?" Abruptly he stopped pacing and stared at me.

"Did she show it to you?"

"No, but. . ."

"Radhika, will you come with me? I'd like to see some of what she's written."

"But there's her diary. We read that."

"Nevertheless. . ."

We went at a time when the house was empty. Ram Mohan had the keys with him. I had a moment of panic when we entered. He looked at me. . .and I wondered at his perspicacity. . . and said, "No, Radhika. there's nothing here. No one. The ghosts . . .they're inside us, you know. not outside."

But if there were no ghosts in the house, it still seemed inhabited by cold despair. Or, was that inside me too? I had tidied most of Akka's things and wondered where her papers could be. Finally we found them at the bottom of Akka's sewing basket, below a pile of odds and ends and some baby clothes. There was a bundle of letters. All Anand's letters to her since their marriage, perhaps, even earlier ones. A bulky packet of photographs. They were Geeta's all the ones that had ever been taken of her, it seemed. Pages and pages covered with Akka's large, scrawling hand. I wondered what it was and began to read curiously. But it was so disjointed, it made no sense at all. I read a few pages in growing bewilderment when I realised that they were passages bodily lifted at random from various books and put together. I mentioned this to Ram Mohan and he, who had been pouring over the pages too, said, "Have you noticed something? How these words recur again and again?" Now I did. A sentence of four words. . .I can't go on. . .appear-

ing after every few lines, like a refrain running through all the pages. In a growing uneasiness I went on. A newspaper cutting here, giving an account of a suicide pact in which the girl died and the man survived. Clipped to this a small piece of paper on which there was a big query mark and the words... "Use it?" Something clicked in my mind as I read this. It meant something. But what? I gave this to him. He glanced at it, his face curiously blank, and said, "And this one." A page with a list of four female names on it. The last one was Rohini. He pointed to the one just above and said, "I know this girl. She was working here when I came. She and Anand were supposed to be very friendly."

"Then, all these others...? Akka knew. . .?"

He shrugged, but his face was not blank any more. There was disquietude on it. We went on silently. And then he suddenly exclaimed, "Oh my God!" I looked at the paper he held in his hand. A page full of signatures. Ram Mohan's signature ...in Akka's hand. As if she'd been imitating the signature, trying to perfect it. What did it mean? The prescription? I saw my growing fear reflected in his eyes.

Anand had said, "She told me the doctor had given her the prescription. I got it for her, that's all."

We hadn't believed him. It had been his word against hers; a dead woman's against a living man's. We had believed the dead. Now? Feverishly I went on rummaging among the papers, scattering them wildly about in my agitation, not really knowing what I was looking for, knowing nevertheless that there would be something...

I HAD THOUGHT OF MY LIFE AS A PIECE OF PLASTICINE I COULD SHAPE ANY WAY I WANTED. NOW I KNEW IT WAS THE OTHER WAY ROUND ... IT'S WE WHO ARE SHAPED BY WHAT HAPPENS TO US

It was Ram Mohan who found it finally. It was in the small wooden box along with the sewing needles. A piece of fuse wire. He showed it to me and I looked at it in horror. Now I knew. The last link. For the first time in my life I felt I was going to faint. "Radhika..." I heard his anxious voice. Slowly the word came into focus again. "Why?" I asked him. "Why did she do it?" He gave me no answer. Instead, he put his arms round me and held me close in a despairing way. And whether he was trying to comfort me or to comfort himself, I did not know.

Even with these few, vague clues, it was not difficult to fit the pieces together. Akka had committed suicide in such a way as to cast suspicion on Anand, to make it seem murder. Her hinted fears of Anand, the diary, the accident, the talk with me the day before, the quarrel the night before that, which I guessed she had herself provoked... they were all part of her plot to incriminate Anand. It was she who had removed the fuse wire. (I should have guessed. The light in her room hadn't been switched on as it would have been if her story had been true.) It was she who had turned the gas on before ringing up Ram Mohan. She had asked Anand to get the pills for her and given him the prescription with Ram Mohan's signature forged on it. And somehow she had managed to get the bottle after Anand had handled it and hidden it in his wardrobe.

Why had she done this terrible thing? Why? "We won't ever know all of it," Ram Mohan said wearily. "It could be one of so many things... Geeta's death, Anand's infidelities..." (And now I could understand Anand's silence. What a burden of guilt he must have carried!) "...her own health, any or all of these could have thrown her off her balance. "Anyway," he looked into my face, "it's all over now. It's the living who matter, not the dead. Think of Anand... free of this terrible suspicion. And Ravi... who gets his father back..."

It was also some comfort to know that only three of us knew the truth. I don't know how Dada and Ram Mohan managed it, but they got Anand released on the grounds that suicide had been proved. Anand, I heard, went straight to Rohini. I did not meet him. Some day, perhaps... It's over for me, I thought. Now to walk away without looking back.

But as I waited for Ram Mohan to come and pick me up on the day of my departure... Dada had gone ahead to the station with the heavy luggage... I realised that there was still something I had to do.

"Ready?" he asked me, hurrying in, bringing in the smell of the hospital with him. Could I speak? Looking at him, I cursed myself for being trapped in by so many things... my sex, my upbringing, conventions, my cowardice... And yet, if I did not speak now...?

"Yes," I said. "Let's go."

He picked up the larger suitcase, then put it down and said, "I'm leaving too. Resigning, I mean."

"And then?" Desolation filled me at the thought that he would now pass out of my life. Ships

Continued on page 35

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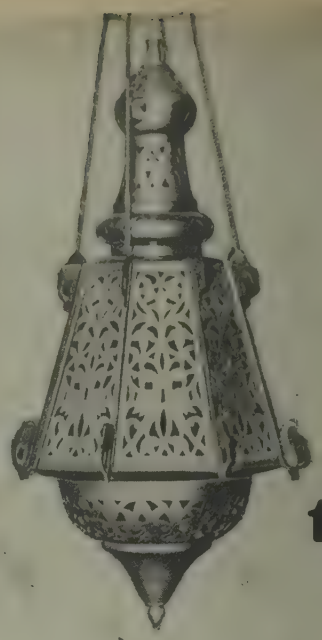

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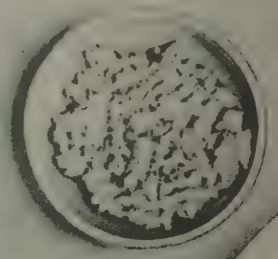

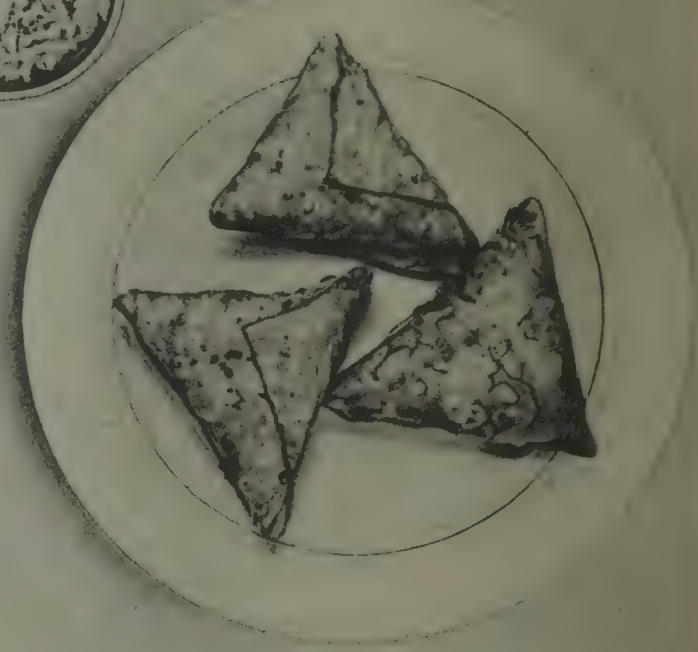

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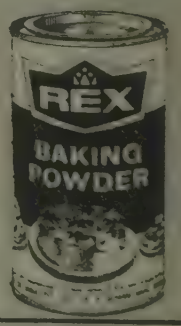

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SHIPS THAT PASS

Continued from page 31

that pass in the night... He shrugged. I gulped, then plunged into it... was this how a parachutist felt when stepping out?... "What are your plans? I mean..." I was plummetting down to earth and where the hell was the rip cord?... "Don't you want to get married? Again?" I added hastily.

"Who would have me?" he smiled.

"Me. I would."

His jaw dropped. He looked so flabbergasted that I began to giggle. Foolishly. "Stop that," he said absent-mindedly. Then, "Do you mean it?"

"Of course. I always mean what I say. I mean, say what I mean."

"Alice in Wonderland," he said, still distrait. And then, in his old manner, "I'm too old for you. When I'm fifty, you'll be only thirty. Think of that."

"And when you're sixty, I'll be only forty. I've thought of that too. What the hell does that matter? What matters is now. And now I want you."

"God, you scare me."

"Coward!"

"You know nothing about me." He was dead serious now. "I'm at the end of so many things. And now... forgive me for being pompous," he smiled, and for that smile, I thought, I'd forgive him anything, "now all that I want is to live the way I feel right. While you... you have a long way to go. You'll be doing so many things..."

"Doing things? Yes, I will," I said slowly, thinking... as long as I have the person I want with me, there's nothing I can't do. And how did I ever believe that marriage or getting married was doing things? Marriage... it's only mating, after all. And that is, like being born and dying, part of that mysterious exercise of being, not doing. With this man I could be myself, do so much...

"Maybe, I'm the father you never had," he offered feebly.

"You might as well give up," I grinned at him, knowing that his resistance was over. Father indeed! "I've made up my mind. Is it yes?"

"Yes."

"Ooooh." I took a deep breath. "What a lukewarm lover!"

"That's what you think my girl. Just you wait and see."

I didn't have to wait long. Not at all, actually. It was I who broke away saying, "God, I'll miss my train. And Dada waiting there with the luggage. . ."

"Time enough." He looked at his watch. "If I drive like crazy, that is."

He did. Fast enough, I thought, to leave all ghosts behind. All the fantasies, too. Twelve o'clock and it's off with the finery and back to reality. . . isn't that what Cinderella is all about? I stole a look at my reality who was now muttering, "God, this is what happens when you get tangled up with youth. 75..." he gave the speedometer a horrified look, "it's sheer cruelty to this car. Radhika..."

"What?"

"Your engineer... what about him?"

Good Lord! Ghanshyam! I had forgotten all about him. He looked at me and began to laugh.

Concluded

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OH FOR A LITTLE QUIET!

There used to be an expression, now totally inapplicable, "it was so quiet he could hear himself breathe." What is applicable today are the words, "He had to shout to be heard." To misquote Coleridge, "Noise, noise everywhere and not an ear does it spare." Loudspeakers situated at vantage points down crowded roads scream out songs intended to add to the festive air, but acting more as irritants. Fortunately, people have begun banding themselves together against this loudspeaker menace.

The Society For Clean Environment (SOCLEEN) Bombay, has initiated a LOS NERAC (Loudspeaker Nuisance Eradication Campaign) programme in Bombay as a part of its drive to reduce noise pollution. They intend to educate the public on the hazards of noise and to publicise the rules and regulations for the control of loudspeaker nuisance.

SOCLEEN has prepared a pamphlet on the noise problem — "Hazards of Noise — Eliminate It," in English and Marathi, of which 10,000 copies have been distributed to the public. In addition, car stickers condemning noise have been made available and anti-noise cinema slides are being shown at Bombay theatres.

The powers to control noise in India lie with the police. SOCLEEN approached the Bombay police and asked them to keep a constant vigil on noise makers, to hand out immediate penalties, as well as to attend to complaints received from the public. But the programme needs mass co-operation or it will die a silent death. On the spot complaints can be made by the public in Bombay by dialling 100. Open public disapproval of loud festival music and violations of "no noise" rules will help curb the menace. A public opinion survey conducted by SOCLEEN in Bombay revealed that the public are unaware of these rules. Here therefore is a list. (Concerned citizens in other cities would do well to make a study of the anti-noise regulations in their cities and to launch a campaign to control noise pollution.)

1) Licences must be obtained by all parties intending to use loudspeakers irrespective of whether they are public or private.

2) Licenced loudspeakers are to be played at a minimum volume audible only to the immediate audience.

3) Restricted timings from 8 a.m. to 12 noon and 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. have been laid down. No loudspeaker can be in use for more than six hours at a stretch.

4) For religious functions, loudspeakers should be fitted inside places of worship.

5) No loudspeaker can be operated from a point which overlooks a public road.

6) Permission to use a loudspeaker will be granted only if the neighbouring community raises no protest.

7) No film music can be played.

8) Permission will not be granted for use of loudspeakers for satsangs, naming ceremonies, marriages and pujas.

This comprehensive set of rules could mean a more peaceful neighbourhood provided people cooperate. Noise, like any other kind of pollution, is injurious to health, and countries all over the world have made noise pollution a punishable offence. With a little civic consciousness, ours could be a quieter, and happier, place to live in.

Compiled by Minu Cherian

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PERSONAL CHOICE:

A DESSERT DREAM!

Bring on the festive mood with a table laid with alluring desserts which the family will enjoy this Christmas. A graduate of the Delhi University, young and energetic GEETA KAPUR is now a resident of U.A.E. On a short holiday in Bombay, she was delighted to share her culinary talents with our readers. The sumptuous desserts suggested by her are quite simple, bringing in the cool, fresh flavours of fruits and vegetables. The cost easily fits the average budget and they take little time to prepare. With her husband, Geeta plans and organises all his official parties and casual get-togethers, receiving a host of compliments from friends and guests.

Photograph : Taiyeb Badshah

KELE KA HALWA

6 bananas
1 cup sugar
½ cup butter
6 cherries
1 cup milk

Skin and mash the bananas. Add milk, sugar, and butter and cook over gentle flame. Keep stirring till the mixture starts leaving the sides. Set it in a serving dish. Garnish with cherries.

PUMPKIN DELIGHT

250 grams red pumpkin
100 grams semolina
300 grams sugar
1 tbsp. dessicated coconut
1 tbsp. cardamom essence
300 grams ghee

Peel the pumpkin. Steam under pressure. Remove and cool. Fry the semolina lightly in ghee. Add sugar and further fry for ten minutes. Keep on frying till the water evaporates. Cool and add cardamom essence. Garnish with dessicated coconut.

SWEET POTATO SURPRISE

1 kg sweet potatoes
¼ kg sugar
1 cup oil
½ cup milk
10 pistachios
10 almonds (optional)

Boil the potatoes and smash them fine. Fry them in oil. Add the sugar. When the mixture starts leaving the sides, add the milk gradually. Mix well and cook till thick. Garnish with pistachios and almonds. Serve hot.

ROYAL APPLE DESSERT

6 apples
1 glass milk
1 tbsp. custard powder
1 envelope gelatine
200 grams biscuit crush
10 tbsp. sugar or to taste

Blend the custard powder with milk. Stir over low flame till thick and smooth. When it cools, add the dissolved gelatine. Mix well and keep aside for half an hour. Cover with the biscuit crush. Cut the apples into small pieces and arrange decoratively over the mixture. Dissolve sugar over low flame. When the mixture leaves side, spread over the biscuit crush. Keep in the fridge for half an hour till well set.

PINEAPPLE SPONGE

1 glass milk
3 eggs
1 tbsp. butter
1 tbsp. monkey nuts, powdered
1 tbsp. custard powder
½ tin pineapple slices

Melt the butter in a frying pan. Put in the sugar. Let the sugar melt slightly. Beat the eggs with the milk separately and add to the sugar mixture. Keep stirring. When it begins to simmer add the custard powder, dissolved in little milk or water. Remove from the fire. When it cools, add pineapple slices and the nut mixture. Chill till serving time.

MARROW SURPRISE

½ kg marrow
4 cups milk
1 cup sugar
2 or 3 nutmeg
½ kg khoya

Peel the marrow. Clean and chop finely. Add the milk and cook on medium flame, till the milk reduces in volume and is thick. Add khoya. Mix it well. Keep over slow flame. Add the sugar. When the sugar dissolves, and the mixture is thick, remove from the fire. Garnish with nutmeg.

CARROT HALWA

1 kg carrots
4 cups milk
1 cup sugar
6 cardamoms
12 sultanas
A few blanched almonds (optional)

Grate the carrots. Add to the milk and keep on fire. Cook the mixture steadily stirring constantly. When done add sugar. Now add sultanas, cardamom and almonds. Keep on slow fire. Cook till thick. Serve hot.

COCONUT BARFI

1 big coconut, freshly grated
1 kg milk
A few drops pink colour
1 tbsp. rose water
7 tbsps. sugar

Grate the coconut. Mix in the milk. Add sugar. Cook over medium flame. Keep stirring constantly. When it begins to boil, lower the flame. Let it simmer. When the mixture is reduced to nearly half, remove from the fire. Add the colour and flavour. Pour the mixture in a greased tray. When cool, cut into pieces.

STUFFED PEACHES

4 peaches
60 grams icing sugar
2 cups cake crumbs
Lemon rind, grated
Orange rind, grated
½ glass wine
Sugar to dredge
Cherries for decorating
1 cup fresh cream, whipped

Halve the peaches. Scoop out the pulp gently to make a large hollow. Mix sugar together with the pulp, crumbled cake crumbs, finely grated lemon rind and orange rind. Mix well and fill up the hollow peaches with this mixture. Place the two halves together and secure with toothpicks to make them look whole. Place them in a greased shallow casserole and pour the wine over them. Sprinkle sugar. Bake in a moderate oven for ten minutes or till the sugar forms a golden crust over them. Remove and garnish with cherries and serve hot. If serving cold, decorate with fresh whipped cream on top.

CARAMELLED BANANAS

4-5 ripe bananas
6 tbsps. sugar
2 tbsps. water

Dissolve sugar in water. Cook over low flame till the sugar caramelizes and has a dark brown colour. Halve the bananas lengthwise and arrange them in a greased tray. Pour the caramel over the bananas. Bake in a moderate oven for about ten to fifteen minutes. Occasionally, baste the bananas with the caramel syrup. Serve hot with the leftover caramel syrup.

APPLE SUPREME

1 kg apples
Lemon grind, grated
6-7 slices bread
Butter as required
4 tbsps. sugar
2 tbsps. golden syrup

Stew the apples in two cups of water along with the lemon rind. Mash the apples well. Butter the bread slices and line the sides of a greased baking dish. Line the bottom with the mashed apple. Cover this layer with the remaining buttered slices. Dredge the top with sugar and the golden syrup. Bake in a moderate oven for half an hour till the top is evenly brown. Serve hot.

COOKERY QUEEN

BALAMBAL SUBRAMANIAN, Madras.

Balambal wins Rs. 100 for this month's best recipe plus a non-stick coated Taper Fry Pan from Trupti Industries, a gift hamper from Corn Products, an oval Casserole and a 4 cup Carafe or cash equivalent from Borosil Glass Works, a 5.5 litres Sainik Pressure Cooker from Evergreen Trades and Agencies and a cook book from Ahmed Mills, Bombay.

NUTRIMUNCH

2 cups wheat flour
2½ cups fine jaggery
2 cups margarine
1 cup Bengal gram dal, roasted
1 cup groundnuts, roasted
1 cup khurmura, wheat flakes or soya granules
1 cup carrots, grated
1 cup dates, finely minced
1½ tsps. baking powder
½ cup milk
1 tsp. cardamom powderd

Mix the jaggery in two-and a half cups of water and place over slow fire to melt. Add the dates and carrots and cook for five minutes. Add the margarine and remove. Cool well. Then add the wheat or rice flakes. Mix well. Coarsely powder the groundnuts and the Bengal gram dal. Add this to the jaggery. Fold in the flour. Add the baking powder and cardamom to a little milk and add to the dough. Knead softly. Add more milk if necessary.

Roll out on a floured board to quarter inch thickness. Cut out with fancy cutters. Arrange on a greased baking tray and bake in moderate oven till done.

RECIPES FROM OUR READERS

Miss Smita Chaubal, Baroda.

SPICY GARLIC BUTTONS

3 cups refined flour
¾ cup butter
3 tsps. baking powder
Milk as required
GRIND TO A PASTE :
15 cloves garlic, flaked
6 black peppercorns
2 cloves
3 cardamoms
2 sticks cinnamon

Sift the flour and baking powder. Mix together the butter and the ground paste. Knead to a smooth dough adding flour, gradually. If necessary, add little milk. Form small balls. Place on well greased baking sheet. Make a depression in the centre. Bake till well done. Cool and remove. Serve with spicy tomato paste.

Mrs. Radha Rao, Trivandrum.

PRIORY BISCUITS

100 grams flour
75 grams rolled oats
150 grams powdered sugar
150 grams butter or margarine
¼ tsp. soda bicarb
½ tsp. nutmeg or cardamom powder
1 dtsp. water

Sieve the flour. Mix the rolled oats and sugar powder in a bowl. Melt the margarine or butter over a low heat and pour onto the dry ingredients in the bowl and mix well. Dissolve the soda in a dessertspoon of water and add to the above mixture and mix with a fork. When well blended, cover and leave in a cool place for six hours.

After six hours, add the nutmeg or cardamom powder and knead this on a slightly floured board until soft and pliable. Make small balls and place on a greased tray, three inches apart. Don't flatten them. Bake for twenty to thirty minutes or until well cooked and golden brown. Allow to cool and then transfer to an airtight tin.

Mrs. K. Thomy, Kerala.

ONION BISCUIT

200 grams flour
100 grams butter
2 onions, grated
50 grams cheese, grated
1 tsp. chilli powder
⅛ tsp. baking powder
⅛ tsp. soda bivarb
Salt to taste

Lightly mix the flour and butter. Add all the other ingredients. Sprinkle cold water and knead to a soft dough. Shape to resemble onions. Keep aside for half an hour. Bake for twenty to thirty minutes.

WEEKLY WINNER

RADHA VENKATARAMAN, Calicut.

Mrs. Venkataraman wins Rs. 50 for this week's best recipe plus a 9 cup Storefresh container from Trupti Industries, a gift hamper from Corn Products, a utility dish and a 2 cup Carafe or cash equivalent from Borosil Glass Works and a cook book from Ahmed Mills, Bombay.

SPICY CRUNCHY BISCUITS

8 cups rice flour
1 cup black gram dal
50 grams Bengal gram, roasted
1 cup butter
¾ cup coconut, grated
4 tsps. red chilli powder
½ tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. asafoetida
1 bunch coriander leaves
Salt to taste
Oil for frying

Dry roast the black gram dal till golden. Grind to a fine powder. In a thali mix together the freshly sifted rice flour and black gram dal powder. Rub the butter into the flour till it resembles bread crumbs. Add spices, salt, grated coconut, roasted gram, baking powder and the chopped coriander leaves. Mix well. Using a little water at a time, knead into a smooth but firm dough. Divide into large balls.

Roll out the balls on a floured board into thin chapattis. Cut into small rounds with a sharp biscuit cutter. Deep fry in hot oil till it turns a crisp golden brown. The flame should be lowered after the biscuits are turned over to ensure thorough cooking. Remove when golden brown. These biscuits can be stored in airtight jars.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Monthly Cookery Queen Contest

All cookery contestants for the Monthly Cookery contest have send in their recipes, non-vegetarian or vegetarian, according to the subjects specified for each month. Out of the seven best selected entries, one Monthly Queen and one Weekly Winner will be selected. The remaining five recipes will be published along with the winning recipes. We give below subjects for the coming three months to enable you to send in your entries well in advance.

February, 1981
SPINACH SPECIALITIES

March, 1981
VEGETABLE PUDDINGS

April, 1981
COOKING WITH DRY BEANS

All entries for February should reach us latest by January 5, March entries by February 5 and April entries by March 5, 1981.

COOKERY CONTESTANTS!

Revised Contest Rules

1. Each recipe must be accompanied by this coupon.
2. The author of each selected entry will be informed in advance and requested to send a passport size photograph of herself to be published along with her recipe.
3. The recipe must be original and not copied from a cookery book, a magazine of any other published material The prize-winner shall have to sign a declaration to that effect before the announcement is made and the prize awarded.

Address your entries to the Cookery Editor, EVE'S WEEKLY, Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay—400 023.

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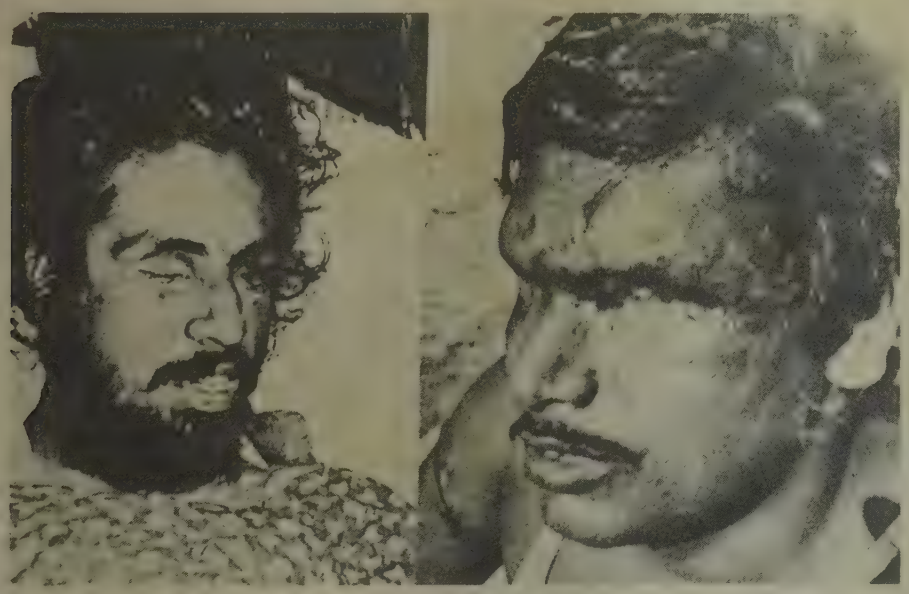
PEOPLE KNOWN AND

If this had happened in any other country in the world, not only would the people have hung down their head in shame, the whole government would have resigned. **Baljit Singh,** the only son of an ageing fruit seller, and **Umesh Yadav,** two convicts in the Bhagalpur jail in Bihar, along with a reported 87 others, were rounded up by the police in the last three months and blinded forcibly by a doctor and some cops first with acid, and then with a sharp instrument. Although it is now suspected that a confidential note by the Bihar Inspector-General of police was sent to the minister concerned, drawing his attention to the unusually large number of blind undertrials in the Bhagalpur jail, it was suppressed. While the Prime Minister, the Home



Minister and the Opposition leaders have expressed their horror and shock over the incident, and the Supreme Court has taken a justifiably tough stand on it, it seems that it will all finally boil down to lip sympathy. The jail superintendent, who was largely instrumental in bringing this gory story to public notice, has been suspended for his pains, a few junior police officers who allegedly committed this crime to "control crime and establish law and order" have been charged with negligence and the Bihar government has issued a notice to all officials not to cooperate with the press so that more details may not come to light.

* * *

First, we had **Shalinitai Patil** setting up her Jijamata hospitals all over rural Maharashtra, now melody queen **Lata Mangeshkar** has decided to start a trust in the name of her famous musician father, the late **Dinanath Mangeshkar.** This trust will set up a chain of hospitals all over rural India. Lata confided that although she had received suggestions that being an artiste, she should build a chain of theatres, seeing the plight of the sick and needy, who have to walk several miles to reach a hospital for treatment, she felt the latter was a more humanitarian cause. Both Dr. Purandare and Information and Broadcasting Minister Vasant Sathe have greeted her project enthusiastically. "Her service to the cause of music is legendary. Now she will serve a humanitarian cause," remarked Mr. Sathe. Lata will raise the funds needed for this project by giving concerts in India and abroad. This should effectively silence her critics who have so far alleged that Lata is so mercenary that she will not perform free for any reason, including humanitarian causes.

* * *

Ooh, where does one begin to stop talking about **Prince Charles?** He came to India on a "goodwill mission," which translated, means to pave the way for English business houses to gain a foothold in India again. But how he charmed, how he charmed, his way through! Whether it was asking naive questions like whether the name of the Prince of Wales museum in Bombay would be changed, to accepting a "bloody" memorandum from agitating female college students who were protesting against the virginity tests, and then asking them naughtily how many times they bunked classes, to showing his bare torso before playing polo, to soaking in Indian dance and music raptly at the NCPA, to accepting a kiss on the cheek from starlet **Padmini Kolhapure,** bonny prince Charlie handled it with panache and savoir faire. How else would the press have written such glowing reports about him, even when they were rudely pushed away several times when they tried to get too close to the heir apparent? But the "cool customer" award goes surely to the Hare Krishna sadhu who walked through the police cordon blithely and presented the prince with the works of tha Hare Krishna movement.

* * *

So now we have a Muslim, on his way to a Haj Pilgrimage, holding aloft Chhatrapati Shivaji's banner! Maharashtra Chief Minister **Abdul Rehman Antulay** and his wife Nargis went to London to bring back the legendary, gem-encrusted "Bhavani" sword, which, it is said, was the favourite sword of Chhatrapati Shivaji. The sword is reportedly lying in Buckingham Palace and has been evaluated at a phenomenal Rs. 25 crores. If this is true, then Indians would have more than a sentimental reason to bring the sword back home to India. Even before we could ask the question, "The British were not interested in returning the Koh-i-Noor to us Why should they return the Jagadamba Bhavani sword to us?" other controversies have crept in. While one section of the press is producing "proof" about the authenticity of the sword, another section is supporting former High Commissioner to London, **Mr. N. G. Goray,** who has said that the "simple truth is that such a thing (the Bhavani sword) does not exist in any museum in England." So the question being asked obviously is, whether the sword lying with the Queen is a clever fake or are there more than two Bhavani swords? Will Mr. Antulay be able to supply the answer soon?

UNKNOWN

What do you know, most of the natural disasters in the recent past in India were caused by UFOs (Unidentified Flying Objects) which came propelled by a small nuclear reactor. This is not being alleged by a sadhu or a swami but by Professor Swadeshkumar Trikha, a physicist at the Delhi University. According to him, a high level of radioactivity in the flooded areas of Morvi in Gujarat and the area near Wankaner in Rajkot, which were hit by a tornado and hailstorm for five minutes in 1979, indicates that it was the work of extra-terrestrial beings. And before you start smiling, Professor Trikha has urged scientists to further study his findings, as he is also positive that Brahmastra, the ultimate weapon in the Mahabharata war, was actually a neutron bomb.

Lakshmi Narayan

IMAGES OF WOMEN

BOOSTING THE

A concentrated dose of all that is crass, debased and vulgar in commercial cinema is offered in T. Rama Rao's "Maang Bharo Sajana"; it is difficult to decide what is more nauseous in the film — its vulgarity or its patent dishonesty. Finally, it is the latter that rouses one's ire. It is bad enough that double standards prevail in our society with regard to women. But to pass it off as light comedy is really a case of over-inflation of the male ego.

The theme is of course a man and two women. A young business man, Ram (Jeetendra), is happily married to a loving woman, Sita (Moushumi Chatterjee), when along comes the other woman, Radha (Rekha) out of his past. Unable to cope with the situation, he sets up house with the other woman, telling neither of the two women of the existence of the other. What follows is sequence upon sequence of male chauvinistic comedy, whereby our hero lives a double life — the days with his mistress (whose relationship he promises to sanctify) and nights with his wife.

He has the explanation all pat — to his wife, he explains that a sleeping (business) partner has come to life and is making demands on his time. To his mistress he complains that his managing partner compels him to do night shifts. The broad puns are heartily applauded by the male audience. And for the ladies, we have that inevitable encounter in the park of the two women, their friendship blossoming in the bliss of ignorance, while hubby does a double take behind the woods.

When things get out of hand, he bribes them with magnificent Conjeevarams (identical of course). In due course, the mistress gives birth to a child and it is clearly time for the denouement. Still, our boyish hero is not up to making a clean breast of things. He has to walk into a confrontation for the two women to sort things out.

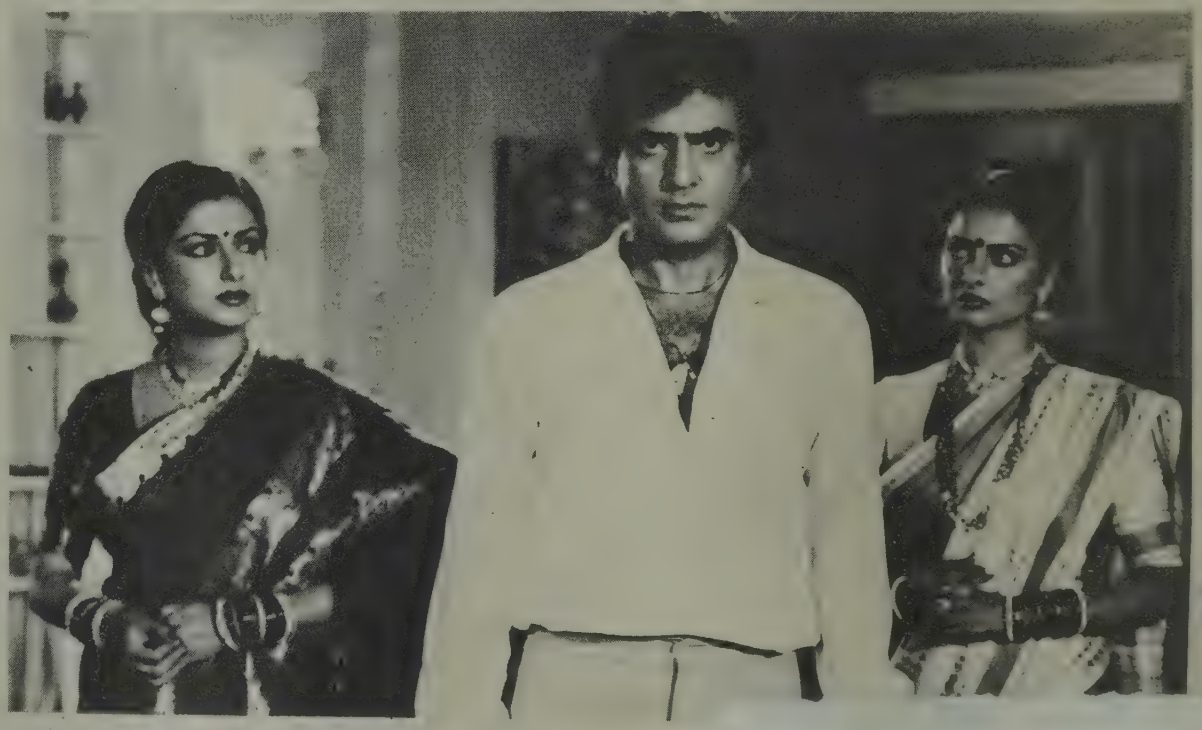
He is however permitted a flashback to explain how the other woman came into his life. She was a dancing girl he had rescued, virginity intact, whom he was to marry, but who was separated from him by a flood. Believing her to be dead, he married Sita. It was only a little human failing that he didn't explain earlier. But it is too late: Radha has poisoned herself, after receiving a harsh tirade from Sita. Sita, suddenly magnanimous, compensates for Ram's weakness. It is she who fills sindhoor in the parting. And it is she who decks out Radha's corpse in bridal finery, while Ram looks on. For sheer bad taste, this scene is unequalled by any other in the history of commercial cinema.

However, taste is merely a reflection of something far more insidious — a vision of the world and a life-style and values rendered more hideous by the screen. It is not accidental that the film was made in the South. It is reportedly a common practice among business communities in the South to maintain more than one household. It would appear that "Maang Bharo Sajana" is some sort of "comic" rationale for it. The attitude towards the man, similar to the one in "Pati Patni Aur Woh", is one of indulgence — "boys will be boys" sort of thing. And of course, women will be women: "sleeping partners" and "managing partners" who cater to the male ego by sacrificing themselves (invariably, the other woman). One wonders which situation would be more humiliating with such a man — that of the mistress, or that of the wife, whether it is worse to be a doormat legally or illegally.

It is out of the question, of course, to imagine the situation in reverse: One woman dallying with two men, at the same time. Even a film like "Ek Baar Phir" where the woman has to choose between two men after much internal conflict (with no wisecracks about sleeping partners) does not go down well with our audiences. The idea that a woman could be anything other than an object of male possession is simply too shocking. But the idea that the wife and the mistress, after being made fools of by the man, compete with each other to "sacrifice" themselves is part of our tradition.

Another lamb at the sacrificial altar of the male ego is the woman in "Dostana". Though not different from any other film in the genre (the virile friendship of two men unshaken by a mere woman) "Dostana" distinguishes itself by the studied and systematic manner in which it is anti-woman. We have it right from the start. The two men are presented to us as warm, generous and affectionate, celebrating their manly "dostana." The minute the woman appears, she spells trouble. Bikini-clad, languorous, she is the Eternal Temptress. She is both Eve and the apple. Such an object of desire is only waiting to be preyed upon — a wayside "loafer" needles her. Subtlety follows subtlety. He sings the song from "Bobby". The audience cheers in self-recognition.

But it does not end here. She hauls him off to the police station where he is locked up. Then comes the **coup de grace**, the police inspector, the all-male hero Amitabh Bachchan, turns to her and looking straight at her plunging neck-line, says, "Jab darwaza khulla chhodthen hain, tab chor andar ghus jata hai" (when the house is left open, the thief gets in). Pause. Wild applause.



Sequence upon sequence of male chauvinistic comedy Moushumi, Jeetendra, and Rekha in "Maang Bharo S

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Eve's

LEFT: Another lamb at the sacrificial altar of the male ego. Amitabh and Zeenat in "Dostana".

MALE EGO...and weathering it

A persuasive argument in favour of the right to work for women. Raakhee, Parikshat Sahni and Biswajeet in "Humkadam".

What he is telling the audience (with appropriate pauses after each line) is that, if you want to make it with the woman, don't sing songs at her in that cheap fashion. Be upright and serious like he is, and tell her to get her clothes on! It's the new style, as he confesses to her later (yes, once she overcomes the initial humiliation, she learns to like it. She starts dating him. She even covers herself modestly) needling her by showing her how wanton she is, instead of behaving like a wanton "loafer."

The writers of "Dostana" (Salim-Javed) have taken a leaf out of the pages of Mills and Boon romances — women like men who are "masterful and mocking"! And so, masterful and mocking he is right through the film, while taking time off to vanquish foes like smugglers and other animals.

His friend, however, is not so successful. Also in love with the same woman, he is made weak by love. He becomes jealous and resentful, and stoops so low that he asks her to sleep with him in exchange for the life of the man she loves. Fate, however, intervenes in the form of a torture-scene, and the beautiful friendship is saved (the woman, too, incidentally). The two friends acquit themselves creditably with manly "dhishum" which vanquishes more foes and all ends well. Friendship triumphs with love as a bonus for the better man.

It is not the glorification of brawn or masculine friendship that is in question. It is the image of the woman as an encumbrance. Necessary, of course, sexually, but a source of discord in a harmonious male world. What makes the machismo of "Dostana" despicable is that it needs to denigrate the female in order to affirm the male. Even "Qurbani" is not as ruthlessly anti-female in its machismo, though it is also about friendship, sacrifice and so on. There is something sadistic about "Dostana". The inspector's words assault the woman far more than the innocuous crooning of the way side loiterer. And his behaviour is clearly intended to be exemplary. As if the world were not sufficiently hostile to woman — let any woman walk alone on a beach — and people needed lessons in it from a police inspector!

"Humkadam" comes as a breath of fresh air after the agonising experience of a film like "Maang Bharo Sajana". A remake of Satyajit Ray's "Mahanagar", "Humkadam" bring to the Hindi screen a healthy "slice-of-life" realism that is not at all unpalatable, judging from its fairly successful run. In this case, plagiarism is most justified. Lacking Ray's artistry, the film, directed by Anil Ganguly yet retains the simplicity and authenticity of the original. Economic pressures force a middle class wife to work. Her in-laws (who have recently moved in) object, particularly the father-in-law. Her husband watches apprehensively as her personality changes. She become more confident, more self-assured. Just as he decides that she is getting a little too independent for his taste, he finds himself without a job. The family is now entirely dependent on her salary. The husband finds his situation humiliating, and tensions build up and blow up into quarrels. The woman, burdened by responsibility, has to take on the emotional "toofan" that her independence provokes. She weathers the storm and brings her husband round to her standpoint (with a piece of melodrama, absent in the original, which commercial film-makers feel incumbent upon them to end their films with).

Nonetheless, Humkadam" is a film that is worth seeing. Using the idiom of commercial cinema, it is a persuasive argument in favour of the right to work for women. Given the force that commercial cinema exerts, it is films like "Humkadam" and "Yeh Kaisa Insaaf?" that constitute some sort of counter effect from within.

Shoba Sadagopan

You'll make an attractive Air hostess but...

I WAS SO KEEN ON THE AIR HOSTESS JOB. EAGERLY I SET OFF FOR MY FIRST INTERVIEW
YOU'RE RIGHT FOR THE JOB AND ATTRACTIVE TOO, BUT UNLESS YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR SKIN!
SHE WAS RIGHT. WHY DID MY SKIN HAVE TO LOOK SO DULL AND LIFELESS
WHEN MY AIR HOSTESS FRIEND HEARD -
LISTEN MEENA, I KNOW WHAT YOU NEED BEFORE YOUR FINAL INTERVIEW-ANNE FRENCH DEEP CLEANSING MILK
IF YOU CLEANSE YOUR SKIN REGULARLY WITH ANNE FRENCH DEEP CLEANSING MILK ITS DULLNESS WILL CLEAR
LOOK HOW IT REMOVES THE STALE MAKE-UP AND HIDDEN DIRT THAT SOAP DOESN'T WASH AWAY. NATURALLY YOUR SKIN LOOKS GLOWING AND FRESH.
I USED ANNE FRENCH DEEP CLEANSING MILK EVERY NIGHT UNTIL I WENT FOR MY FINAL INTERVIEW
CONGRATULATIONS, THE JOB IS YOURS. AND REALLY WHAT A MARVELLOUS DIFFERENCE IN YOUR SKIN!
IT'S HARD WORK BEING AN AIR HOSTESS - BUT LOTS OF FUN TOO. THANK YOU ANNE FRENCH FOR A LOVELY COMPLEXION - FOR EVERYTHING.
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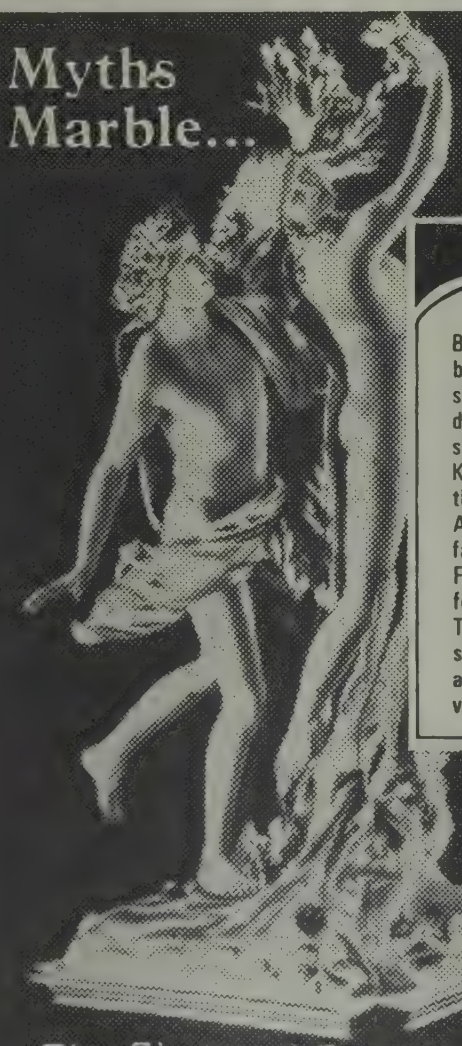

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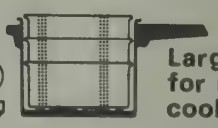
2 

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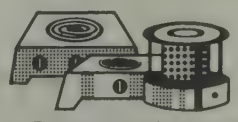
3 

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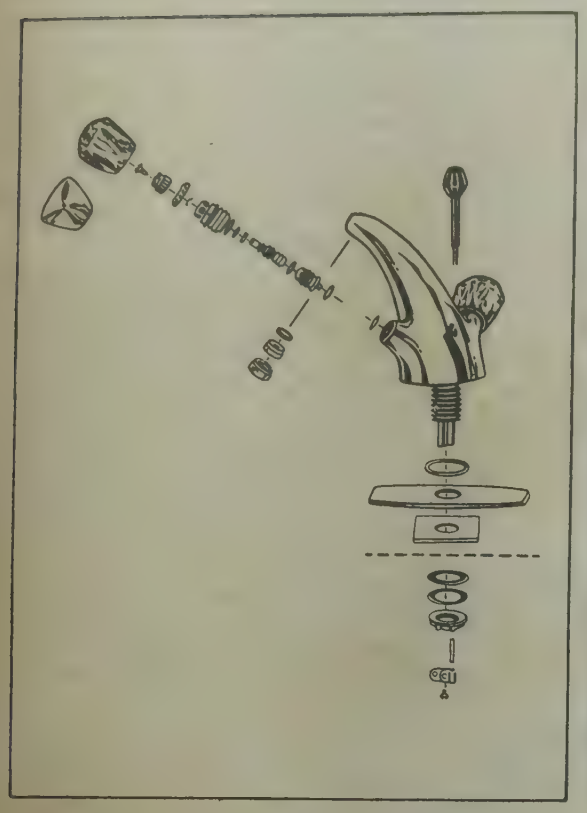

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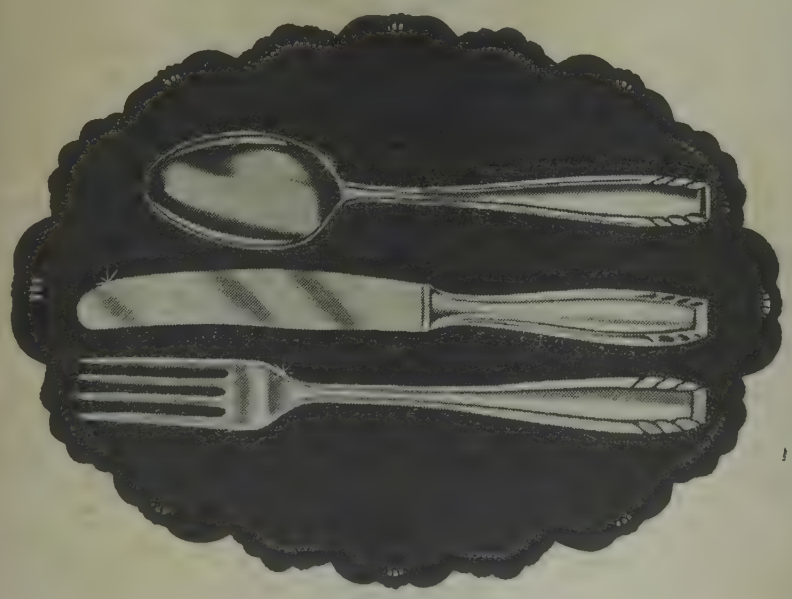

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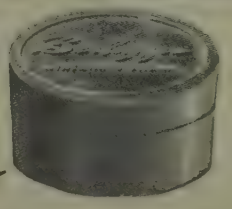

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MATERIALS:

Knitting yarn modella 'Cashmilon' 4 ply: 13 balls blue 163, 2 balls each Red 119 and White and 1 ball Yellow 143 (25 grams each). Crochet hook no. 13.

MEASUREMENTS:

Bust 86.4 cms., length 76 cms., sleeve seam 28 cms.

TENSION:

7 tr. and 4 rows of tr. to 2.5 cms. measured over rows of tr. worked on crochet hook No. 13.

ABBREVIATIONS:

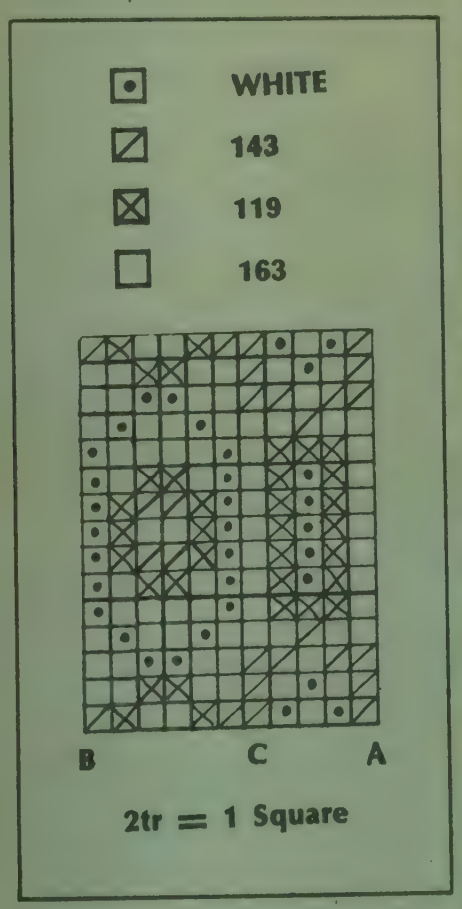
ch. = chain; tr. = treble; sts. = stitches; dec. = decrease; dc. = double crochet; rep. = repeat; s.s. = slip stitch.

FRONT

With blue yarn work a row of 126 ch., turn.

1st row: 1 tr. in 4th ch. from hook, 1 tr. in each ch. to end, 2 ch., turn (124 sts.).

2nd row: 1 tr. in each st. to end, 2 ch., turn.



3rd row: As 2nd row.

Now join colours as required and work 15 rows of multicoloured pattern from the given chart working 2 Blue tr. at each end (work 2 tr. for each square of the chart). Rep. pattern from A-B five times, then from A-C once. After completing the pattern, fasten off different colour

Photograph: Talyeb Badshah

Knitted with "modella" knitting yarn.

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THE GIFT

Sarla Mehta

TO TIRED OLD MRS. HILL, THE MISSPELLED SCRAP OF A NOTE EXPRESSING SUCH REBELLIOUS SENTIMENTS, WAS THE BEST CHRISTMAS PRESENT SHE COULD HAVE RECEIVED

OLD Mrs. Hill opened her eyes, and closed them quickly once again, her forty years of life in India having done nothing to accustom her to the harshness of early tropical sunlight. What had awakened her she wondered, blinking weakly. There it came again — "batli-papaar!" It was the raucous shout of that awful peddler who bought old bottles and newspapers.

As she sipped her morning tea — the sugar tongs missing again, Swamy really ought to have learnt how to set a tea tray after all these years — her thoughts wandered to all the sounds that were peculiarly Bombay. Right on schedule the sound of a driver slamming the car door, hawking and spitting hit her eardrums. A crow squawked in protest. Another day in Bombay had begun.

Old Mrs. Hill sighed, then perked up her ears when her favourite peddler came round. This was the seller of potatoes and onions and he had a call that was sonorously beautiful. He started with a deep rolling growl in his throat, reminiscent of the way a peacock honks before its mewling cry; and then in a throbbing wave of sound called "kanda batatewalla" with a rising cadence.

Her nerves soothed, Old Mrs. Hill only winced slightly when a shrill radio commercial wafted through the window. She rose painfully, succumbing thankfully to her familiar early morning chores as she faced herself in the bathroom mirror while brushing her teeth. Her lined and weathered face gleamed back at her with a sickly yellow cast. English livers broke down quickly in the tropics. She permitted herself a small smile, remembering how the people of Panipur — where her husband had commanded the British garrison — had called them the "yellow-faced ones." Well, the daily quarter bottle of whisky hadn't really helped to improve her colour either.

Dressed to face the day, she opened her bedroom door and met Fifi's frenzied greeting with a slight lightening of spirits. Somehow the fat ugly mongrel, which she had rescued from the streets and mischievously misnamed, gave her a small feeling of having accomplished something, of having something at least to show for the arid years in India. The years of Panipur had ended in 1947 in hatred — soldiers and townspeople alike making it absolutely clear that they were not only delighted to get rid of the Hills and their ilk, but could get on perfectly well without them.

Disappointing. After all the years of sweat and effort Colonel Hill had put into Panipur, the genuine affection and understanding he had showered on his men, they wanted him out. In no uncertain terms. The shock of knowing how the Indians had really felt about him all along, was something the Colonel couldn't face. He did get out — feet first. His grave still stood in the Panipur cemetery, quite neglected.

Well, she'd stayed on. There was nothing and no one to go back home to. She'd managed to buy herself a tiny flat in a once exclusive but fast deteriorating area of Bombay. Her private income just barely kept her in reasonable comfort.

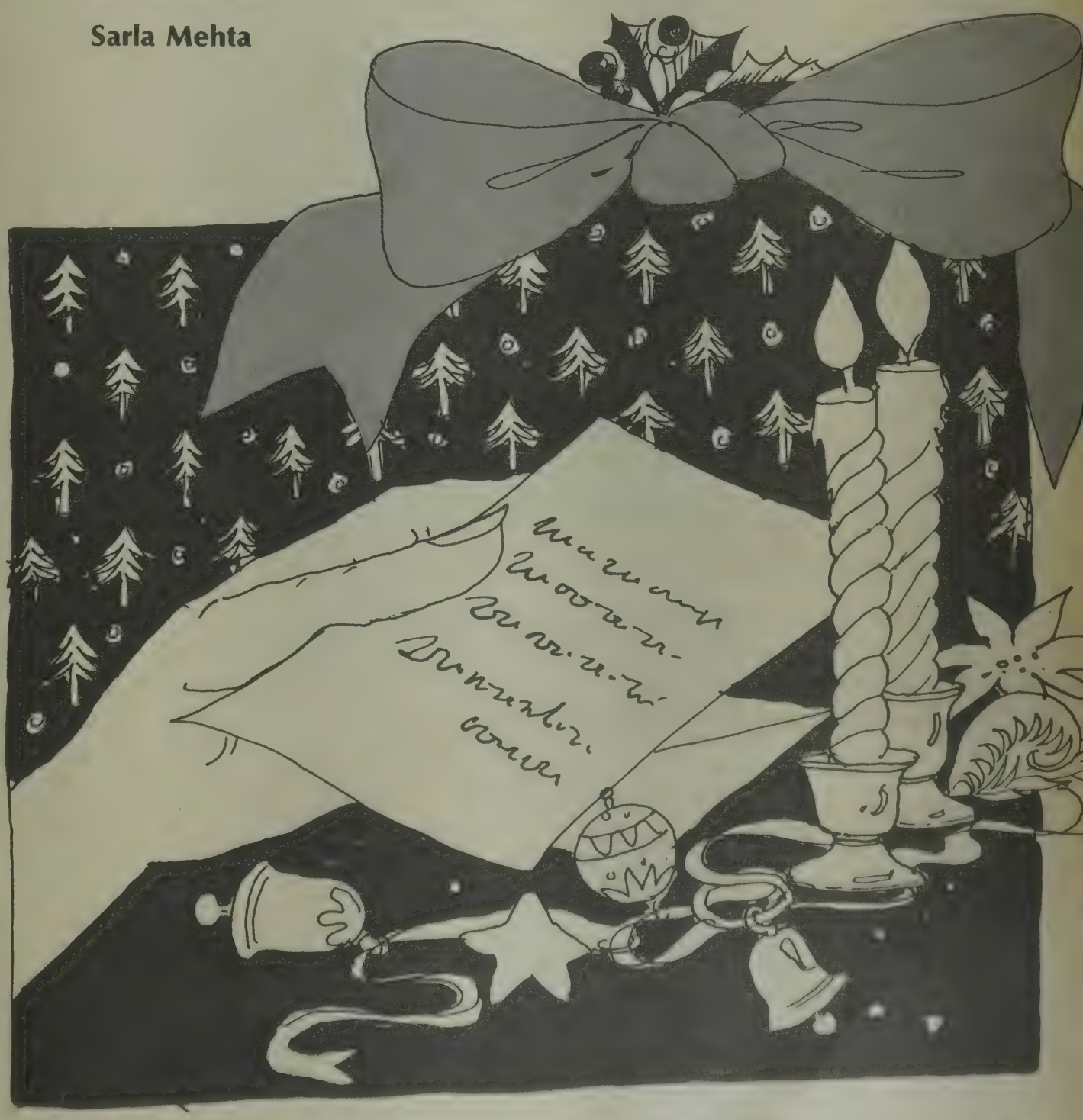
Drifting towards the breakfast table, she frowned as her eye fell upon the dull brass-ware that cluttered every available surface, the legacy of her Indian years. Swamy was really impossible. He avoided polishing the brass till it looked dingy enough to elicit an explosion of annoyance from her. And look — he'd forgotten to put out the salt and pepper on the table again.

She settled into a chair with little clucks of irritation. Cleo leapt into her lap with a petulant mew, then purring with pleasure as the withered hand stroked her fur.

The card lying by the side of her breakfast plate surprised her at first. She rarely received any mail. Quite simply there was nobody who might write to her. She had no friends. There was Fifi, the beautiful black kitten Cleo, Swamy the cook... the totality of her existence. There was no one else.

She opened the card curiously. The hideous poison green Christmas tree on it startled her. "Merry Christmas," it said, "from the Longlife Insurance Company." God, it was Christmas again! She'd buy a nice piece of steak for the animals, and give Swamy twenty rupees as Christmas baksheesh.

Continued on page 62



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ASP/FOR/11/80

SAPNA SARANG:

Another Dream Girl In The Making?

Jyothi Venkatesh

Producer-director Kidar Sharma has launched many a famous name on the film firmament and continues to do so even today. His latest find is young Sapna Sarang who first made her mark on T.V. and is now to star in her sponsor's film "Pehla Kadam"

Hazel eyed and dusky Sapna Sarang is the latest discovery of veteran producer-director Kidar Sharma who has, in his illustrious career spanning more than four decades, introduced celebrities like Raj Kapoor, Mala Sinha, Geeta Bali, Madhubala and Shashikala. With his "Pehla Kadam" Kidar Sharma is introducing Sapna as a leading lady opposite Pratap Sharma.

"Stars were at one time made and unmade in this small room," Kidar said leading me to a small room in the dilapidated Shree Sound Studios where his office is still functioning. He had made it a point to sit along with his discovery when I interviewed her in his office.

"I have introduced stars like Madhubala and Raj Kapoor. But let me tell you, I have not come across an artiste as versatile as Sapna," Kidar Sharma said. Sapna's real name is Veena. It was Kidar who christened her Sapna for the screen.

According to Sapna, there was no screen test by Kidar Sharma when he cast her as the leading lady of his "Pehla Kadam" when it was launched three years ago. "I had made a name as an actress in Kidarji's television feature film 'Bheegi Palkein' which was telecast in 1976." "Bheegi Palkein" was made for television with Virender Sharma as the leading man by Virender himself. Right now, Sapna said, encouraged by the rave reviews the film received when it was telecast twice on the television by public demand. Kidar is trying to get a sponsor to make "Bheegi Palkein" as a full fledged feature film.

Like most starry-eyed newcomers, Sapna too claims that she intends to accept only roles with scope for real acting. She also claims to have turned down several offers casting her in the minor role of a sister or sister-in-law.

Among the films which Sapna says she has turned down, are "Ek Baar Phir" which catapulted Deepti Naval to the top and "Rajput", a multi-star film starring Dharmendra, Rajesh Khanna, Vinod Khanna, Hema Malini and Ranjeeta. "I refused to do the role Deepti did in 'Ek Baar Phir' because I didn't like to do the kissing scenes she did. I am just not cut out for such scenes. If I do such scenes I will become conscious of what I am doing and the camera just cannot hide it. I refused 'Rajput' because I didn't want to end up as a decorative piece in the film. Tell me what role possibly could I have when there were so many stars working already in it?"

Sapna is no product of any acting institute, but she feels that though one cannot possibly learn acting, the technique that goes to make an actor can be taught. "I have had absolutely no stage experience whatsoever. I have observed Kidarji at close quarters when he is at work and learnt from him whatever I am capable of doing today as an artiste." Amidst opposition from family folks, Sapna has taken up acting as a career.

Sapna isn't in favour of typecasting. She agrees that image will come in the way of an artiste. Yet she has no other alternative but to toe the line as far as saddling herself with an image is concerned. Because, as she puts it "In India, for an artiste to emerge successful, image is necessary. It is a must in the agenda of an artiste. The audience saddles you with a set image whether you like it or not. You just cannot help it. At this stage of my career, I do not want to saddle myself with a negative image and hence I play safe and accept only positive roles. Let's face facts, I do not have the kind of figure to do any and every role."

Apart from Kidar Sharma's "Pehla Kadam", Sapna has been signed to play the romantic lead in a film called "Phool Aur Kante" to be directed by Kidar himself with Pratap Sharma as the leading man. Yet another film of Sapna is slated to be launched soon by one Seema Mukherjee with a top star as the leading man. "Negotiations are going on for a couple of other films which may materialise in a day or two," Sapna said.

Sapna makes it clear that she is not bound by any contract to Kidar Sharma or the producer of "Pehla Kadam", even though if they had wanted they could have curbed her freedom to accept roles outside. "She doesn't select films on my say-so," Kidar replied when I ask him whether Sapna has to route every offer that she gets through him and do them only if she has his approval.

Sapna is waiting with her fingers crossed for the release of her maiden venture, "Pehla Kadam", which may determine the shape of the future course of her career. Whether she will prove to be as illustrious and successful as her mentor's earlier discoveries like Ramola, Madhubala, Geeta Bali and Mala Sinha remains to be seen.

Photograph: Kidar Sharma

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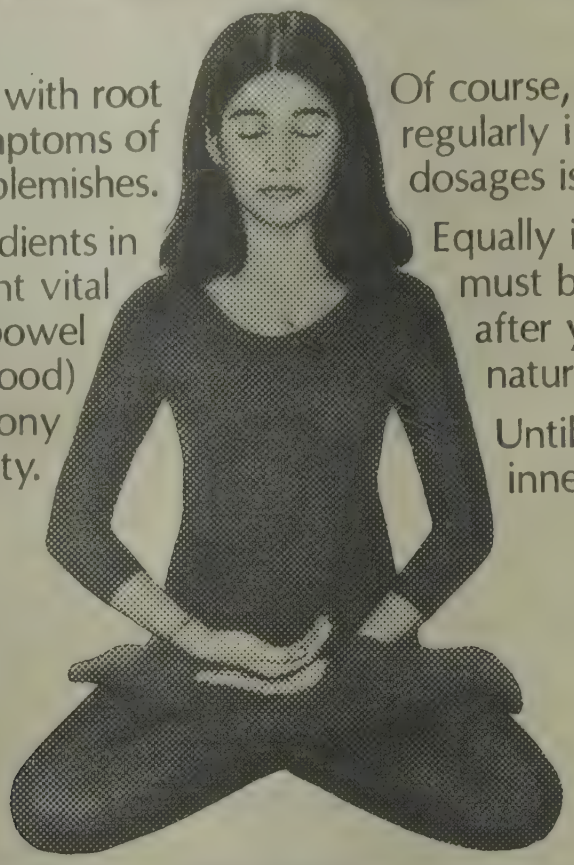

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WOMEN IN SPORT

Our sportswomen need and deserve more attention and encouragement than they get. We do our bit on this page.

BATS AND BOUQUETS

Shirish Nadkarni

The male side of Bombay's cricket may well be in relative doldrums, but the women did Bombay proud in the recent Women's National Cricket Championships. The Ranji Trophy may have eluded Bombay's grasp in the last few seasons, but Bombay's cricketing women would not be denied this year. They dethroned Bengal, champions for the last five years in succession. and won the handsome trophy which they had first won in 1974, the inaugural year of the competition.

For their defeat by a margin of a little over 50 runs, Bengal had themselves to blame. Firstly, their butter-fingered fielders dropped quite a few catches, including a crucial one of Bombay opener **Shobha Pandit** when the bespectacled Bombay girl had not yet got into double figures. Shobha went on to top-score with a powerful century, 111 out of Bombay's score of 304. Yet, even the most ardent supporters of Bombay would not have dreamed that the 300-mark could have been reached. The end of the innings was in sight at 252 for 9 wickets, but a spirited last-wicket partnership of 52 runs, made in singles and twos. and aided by the poor Bengal fielding, helped Bombay achieve a total that finally proved beyond the reach of the defending champs.

It was that 52 runs that haunted Bengal in the ultimate analysis, for it was practically Bombay's final margin of superiority. That, and a superb all-round performance from Test opener Shobha Pandit. After that sterling century, Shobha came on with her offspin just as Bengal skipper **Sreerupa Bose** and another Test cap **Lopamudra Bhattacharjee** looked like taking the game out of Bombay's hands with a century partnership. Shobha grabbed three quick wickets to send Bengal crashing to 231 for 8; the tail was quickly consumed, and that was that.

Jamshedpur proved to be a pleasant setting for the seventh national championship. But the fact that women's cricket could do with a bit of discipline was seen on the opening day itself when, after the inauguration by the president of the Bihar Cricket Association, only one match of the four scheduled initially could be played, as quite a few teams had played truant. Fortunately, most of them turned up the next day, and the day after, to prevent a fiasco of the draw.

In first-round skirmishes, Bombay looked to be the most formidable side, bundling out Kerala for just 34 runs, and then notching up the required score for the loss of just a solitary wicket. Bombay skipper **Diana Eduljee** had a deadly spell when she snapped up a hat-trick to end with fine figures of 5 overs, 1 maiden, 7 runs and 3 wickets. Almost a similar fate befell Uttar Pradesh against Tamil Nadu. They won the toss, chose to bat, and were skittled out for a paltry 38. Tamil Nadu did not even lose a wicket while wiping out that score!

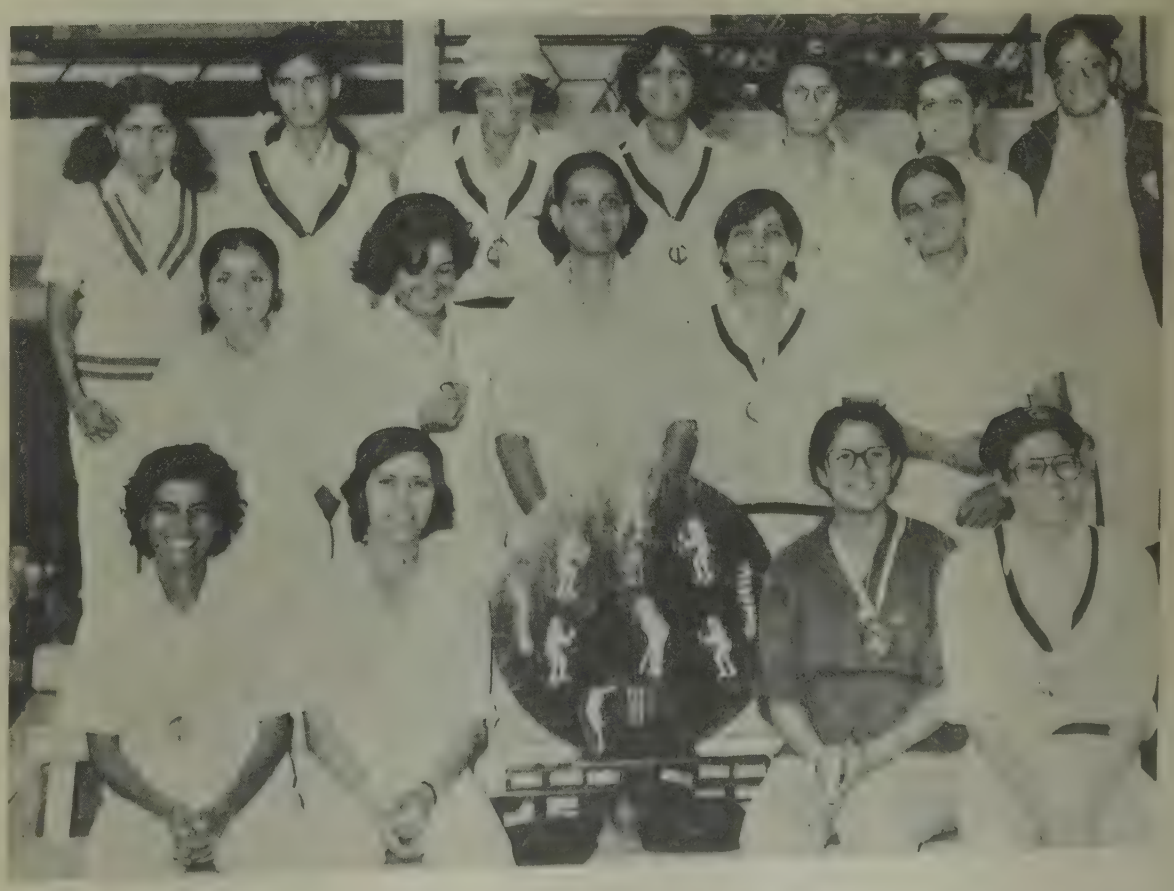
Haryana did slightly better against Karnataka, notching up 55 runs, but the Karnataka batswomen were more than equal to the task and lost just two wickets while sailing into the second round. Jammu and Kashmir gave Assam a slightly better fight in yet another first-round match by grabbing five Assam wickets before the latter overtook the 53-run total put up by J & K.

Andhra Pradesh seemed to give indications of being a thorn in the flesh of most teams when they put up an imposing score against a weak Vidarbha side. A.P.'s 230 for 6 wickets compared well with Vidarbha's poor 46 all out. But Andhra were proved to be paper tigers when they ran into champions Bengal next. Spinner **Sharmila Chakravarty** took 5 wickets for 12 to hasten Andhra's end for just 57 runs; and Bengal hit these up for the loss of just one wicket.

Assam were also put firmly in their place by Gujarat. After hitting up 227 for 7 wickets (innings closed), Gujarat pacewoman **Seema Patel** wrecked Assam with a 6-wickets-for-4-runs performance. Assam could put up just 46 runs in reply. Similarly, Maharashtra strolled into the quarter-finals, sidelining Delhi easily. With a good bowling performance from **Shubhangi Kulkarni**, who was ultimately adjudged the best all-rounder in the competition, Delhi were bundled out for 62, and Maharashtra hit up the requisite runs for the loss of just three wickets. Rajasthan were easily beaten by Bihar in another pre-quarter final.

In the quarter-final action, Bengal did not fare as well with the bat as expected. Gujarat kept them down to 119 for eight wickets. But Gujarat collapsed disastrously for what turned out to be the lowest score of the competition — 22 runs. Sharmila Chakravarty had the enviable figures of four wickets without conceding a single run. Karnataka set Bombay a tally of 101, which Bombay wiped out for the loss of just two wickets. Shobha Pandit, who batted consistently throughout the championship (except in the semi-final, when she was dismissed for four), hit a half-century without losing her wicket and **Radhika Kothari** contributed a strokeful 32.

Other quarter-finals saw Bihar allowing Maharashtra to get the upper hand by bad fielding and inept handling of the bowling;



RIGHT : The Bombay Women's Cricket team with captain Diana Eduljee (seated second from left) and Behroze Eduljee (ext. right).

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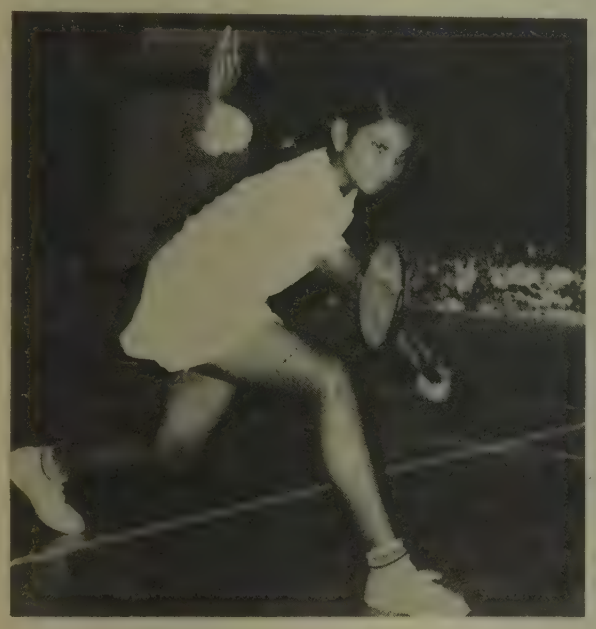
and Madhya Pradesh shocking last year's runners-up Tamil Nadu. Maharashtra, aided by lapses in the field, got to 146 for five wickets, which proved a good enough total for the cavalier Bihar batswomen who went for their strokes, and were bowled out for just 109. **Shubhangi Kulkarni** performed well with both bat and ball, scoring an unbeaten 53 and capturing 4 wickets. M.P., with the help of a patiently made 60 by Test batswoman **Rajeshwari Dholakia,** notched up 146 for six. **Kalpana Maish** struck with the ball for M.P. and bagged six wickets for 47. Tamil Nadu never recovered from the blow of having their best batswoman **Fowzieh Khaleeli** run out in the second over of the match.

The semi-finals saw M.P. handing the match to Bombay on a platter by electing to bat after winning the toss. Bombay made



the most of a moist pitch to run through the M.P. batting for 108. The **Eduljee** sisters, **Diana** and **Behroze** contributed most to M.P.'s collapse, taking six wickets between them. Bombay's major runs came through a quick 81-run second-wicket stand between opener Radhika Kothari and **Vrinda Bhagat;** and the target was reached for the loss of just two wickets.

Bengal had an equally easy match against Maharashtra, for whom Shubhangi staged a lone but losing battle. Bengal skipper Sreerupa Bose hit form with the bat to top-score with 85. She and Lopamudra Bhattacharjee were unlucky that their partnership fell just short of the 100-run mark. After adding 98 runs, Lopamudra was out for a well-made 84, Bengal ultimately hit up 251, which proved to be a score well out of the reach of Maharashtra. The latter just about managed to reach three figures, with Shubhangi swinging the bat for 59 swashbuckling runs. The spin of Sharmila Chakravarty, who bagged five wickets in just 10 overs, proved too much for Maharashtra to negotiate.

And so, on to the final, where Bombay managed to hit up the highest score of the championship, thanks to the inept Bengal fieldng. In fact, a general comment on the standard of fielding throughout the championships was that it was rather poor. England will be over here in the very near future for a Test series, and if our girls continue to field like this, there is no hope of our giving the athletic Englishwomen a run for their money. A half-chance taken in the field often changes the entire course of a match in favour of the fielding side; similarly, a few careless runs given away boosts the morale of the batting team. Our girls must learn these lessons — and fast!

Ameeta Kulkarni

LEFT : Radhika Bose

* * *

Radhika Bose, the tall dark Bombay collegian, who turned sixteen years of age on November 27, had the proud distinction of achieving the coveted individual doubles crown when she bagged the singles and doubles title (with **Sharmila Joglekar** of Sholapur) in the fourth Junior Badminton Nationals, which were held in the Mohan Ahuja Stadium of Jamshedpur, scene of last year's senior Nationals. But all of Radhika's efforts could not prevent the eclipse of Maharashtra in most of the team events.

Last year, Maharashtra had walked away with nine of the eleven titles at stake, including the prestigious senior boys' and senior girls' team titles. This year, apart from Radhika's two noteworthy efforts, Maharashtra had to return with empty hands. The major reasons for this debacle is, to some extent, the passing on into the ranks of the senior players like **Ameeta Kulkarni;** and the lack of adequate back-up talent in the state. Apart from this, the game has caught on in popularity so much all over the country that states like Kerala, Punjab and Bengal are producing very good crops of juniors.

Radhika's best feat was to topple **Madhumita Goswami** of Bengal and the Railways in the final, in straight games, at 11-9, 12-9. Madhumita had gained selection to the country's Uber Cup squad that played recently in Jakarta. In the current rankings in India, the speedy Bengal girl is ranked third among the women after **Ami Ghia** and **Ameeta Kulkarni.** But Madhumita is equally wayward and prodigal; and Radhika exploited these failings to the full in her straight-games victory. Madhumita was in fact in the lead at 9-7 in the second game when she fell into one of her erratic moods and conceded points in a reel to let Radhika off the hook.

This is not to detract from the Bombay girl's fine performance. Just the previous day

INTERNATIONAL SPORTSWOMAN OF THE MONTH

The vote this month goes, after a long, long time to the inimitable former "Little Miss Icicle", **Chris Evert** of the U.S.A. The former Wimbledon queen who lost the final of the world's premier tennis tournament to Evonne Goolagong-Cawley this year, is still perhaps the most difficult woman player in the world to beat today. Another former Wimbledon queen (of 1977) **Virginia Wade** of Britain found this to her cost in the annual Carnation Wightman Cup, when Britain and U.S.A. clashed in the final in the expected "Battle of Roses".

Virginia was leading Chris at 5-1, and 40-15 up on service after being one-set all. At that stage with two match-points at hand, Ginny found the poker-faced American clawing her way back from the very jaws of defeat. It was incredible to see Chris winning 26 of the next 29 points, to win the match finally 7-5, 3-6, 7-5. The win which was perhaps the grittiest of her illustrious career enabled Chris to preserve her clean slate as being unbeaten when playing for America. It also helped the States to score once again over Britain.

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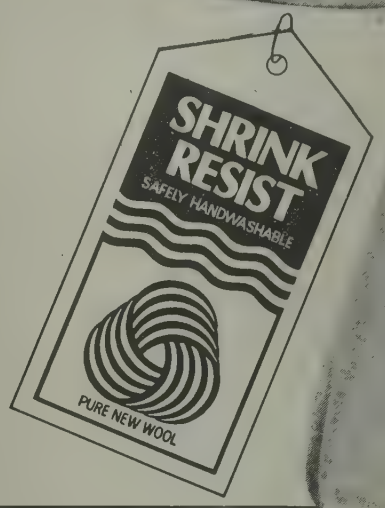

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WOMEN IN SPORT

she had showed her class by thrashing **Sindhu Sreedharan** of the Combined Universities at 11-0, 11-1 — the same Sindhu who had dragged her over three close games in the team event final, which the Universities had won over Maharashtra by a 2-1 margin. It was also Radhika's big hitting and reach that had played a vital part in her doubles victory with Sharmila Joglekar over the Bombay pair of **Janhavi Apte** and **Rahat Hutheesingh,** their team-mates in the Maharashtra side.

Radhika's showing is mute tribute to the hard work she puts in for her badminton. Assiduous at training, she is among the fittest Indian players today. There is no doubt at all that she will soon don the country's colours in the next Uber Cup (she played for India earlier against England in the recent "Test" series). One should not be too surprised to see her bag the national women's singles titles in the none-too-distant future.

* * *

At the recently-concluded sixth Asian Youth Basketball championships at Bangkok, it is worthy of mention that Indian girls showed considerable improvement over the performances of their seniors. Our women had bagged only the seventh spot this year, while our girls were narrowly beaten by Thailand 59-68 in the match for third-fourth places. It is even more significant to note our girls' improvement in the tournament itself — for, in an earlier league round they had been trounced by Thailand by 22 points!

The performance of our girls becomes even more significant with the 1982 Asian Games at New Delhi fast approaching. **Joe Puthran,** a basketballer of note, who witnessed the Bangkok championships, singles out four girls for attention — **Nandini Prasad, Kiranjeet Bittu, Sarita Sharma and Ananthalaxmi,** who had donned the country's colours at the Hong Kong Asians in September. The experience of these two tournaments must have benefitted our girls tremendously.

A hard-fought win over Malaysia and an easy victory over Sri Lanka enabled India to place second in the pool, even though they were beaten comfortably by Thailand. The other group had the powerful Chinese and South Koreans, with the latter winning the championship after thrashing India in a semi-final knock-out match, and then showing splendid team-work in edging out China by a 83-76 margin.

The Indian girls basically lacked height and speed. They were also not very accurate in shooting; and unless they learn to convert whatever chances come their way, they will find it difficult to survive in tough international competition where even half-chances are invariably converted under the basket.

Sarita, Gursimran, Kanwaljit and **Vidhya** played well in patches, but lacked cohesion and team-spirit, reports Puthran. Ananthalaxmi was the only one to give consistently good displays. In addition to controlling the ball and rebounding, she chipped in with an occasional fast break.

LIFE'S A FUNNY THING

A spoonful of humour to make the medicine go down

A wonderful time was being had by all!

We were at the Annual Office Dance being held at a five-star hotel valiantly trying for six. They would have got it too if a waiter hadn't been found curled up inside the big bass drum as drunk as a lord.

Anyway, there we were. It was 11.00 p.m. and the place was swinging. The office crowd were eating as if they were in the Sahara and drinking as if Morarji Desai were going to clamp down on every bar in town. Boys and girls were dancing coiled around each other like pythons making love.

The boss and his charming wife had departed ten minutes earlier, so we could let our hair down. A couple of real good sports.

• • •

When the music stopped the Production Manager climbed on a chair and said that Miss Coral Rosario would now entertain us with a song. She did. It was a little thing called "One way ticket." When she sang it she said, "One way ticket" about sixty-one times so that song was ill-named. Anyway, we applauded like children at father's coming-home day. The Production Manager climbed on the same chair and said, "Mr. Mark Lobo will now give us a solo on his guitar." Mark chose to play "Chapel in the moonlight." If Chet Atkins could have heard him, he'd have broken a one-thousand dollar guitar on Mark's head. I know I felt like doing it.

Undaunted, the Production Manager looked round for a chair to climb on but someone was sitting on it. So he stood on tiptoe and said, "Miss Mariola Webber and her charming sister, Luise, will now give us a duet." The girls walked languidly to the mike — they had to. They were as squished as a bowl of noodles. Anyway, they sang superbly.

I sincerely thought this was going to be the best darn AOD in history when upraised voices cut into my thoughts. I turned. Six feet from me, the Radio Manager and the Outdoor Assistant were standing nose-to-nose and the dialogue went like this:

"You're a hunk of lard with wood between your ears," said the R.M. The O.A. said, "Oh yah, well, you're so damn low down your head doesn't reach your brains. Come outside. I'll tear off one of your arms and beat you to pulp with it." Good God! I heaved myself between them and said, "Hey, you nuts, we're here to enjoy ourselves and not to shed blood." They looked at me as if I were the Invisible Man. The O.A. said, "Let's go into the garden. I'll punch you straight from here to Breach Candy." God, again! Brilliant idea. I said, "Chair the guy." About four of us chaired him and I led a circular procession singing, "He's a jolly good fellow."

• • •

Susie said, "Lord, you have a bunch of howling maniacs for your colleagues." I said, "Apart from the understatement you've got something there." She helped herself to a tall glass of tomato juice that made me want to heave. I waved at the bandleader and he broke into, "I saw her standing there." I looked around, but couldn't see her standing anywhere. The dancing began again. John Lennon, hearing the rendition, would have jumped off the terrace of his New York bungalow — you know, the one that cost four hundred thousand pounds, and all. Then I had another flash of genius and said, "Sing everybody." So everybody sang. The noise would have cracked a hard rock.

Just then there was a shriek that made my blood run cold. A gal by the name of Lorraine Go-out, sorry, Cummin, had fainted. She's a looker, so about seven lads were fanning her with hankies and holding wet ones on her brow. The rustics! I said, "Give the girl some air." They did and surely enough Lorraine staggered to her feet and made like a B-grade movie by saying, "Where am I?" Nobody told her.

* * *

Then, out of the blue the band went into "Jana Gana Mana" and those of us who could stand without falling down, did so. When the singing stopped, a mass of humanity weaved itself towards the door. Morchas couldn't compare. Outside in the cool night air, Susie said, "Better than the Marx Brothers. Thanks for bringing me." I said, "I detect a note of sarcasm there but, my love, whither I go, you go. Right?"

"Right," she said squeezing my hand. I've got Susie well trained. Then we went home (in a cab, mind you) and flaked out like Sonny Lister being hit by Joe Louis. Ahhhhhh...

See you,

— SUNNY

GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER

Continued from Page 11

involved. The Judge granted them bail. This was subsequently made the basis for granting the men bail in the Sessions Court.

The Delhi Administration appealed for the cancellation of bail. The review petition was again heard by M.L. Jain, though he himself mentioned that an appeal against his order releasing the three women had been made to the Supreme Court. Nevertheless, he proceeded to hear the case — and upheld the grant of bail.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Chaddha had launched her one-woman crusade. Neighbours advised her to seek the help of the Metropolitan Councillor of the area. He gave her introduction letters to the editors of the leading newspapers of the city. There started Mrs. Chaddha's rounds of the capital's newspaper offices. Though they took down all the details from her, nothing appeared in the press for a month. It was only when the story was published by a Delhi daily that reporters from other papers also began ringing up.

Anyhow, once the ice was broken, various newspapers published accounts of Shashi's Bala's death. Strangely enough, M. L. Jain, in his judgement upholding the grant of bail, took exception to Satyarani's raising her voice. "She (the mother of the deceased) has also approached the press, which has highlighted the whole occurrence out of proportion and the life of the family of the accused has simply been made miserable." There was no appreciation of the fact that the mother had, after all, lost her daughter.

Well-wishers suggested that she go directly to H. M. Patel. The next morning she made her way to the then Home Minister's residence. "Mr. Patel won't even understand your language," his personal assistant told Satyarani. "What's the point of your seeing him?" Some body standing nearby advised her. "Why don't you go to Morarji Desai's house?"

So off she went to the then Prime Minister's house the next morning. Delhi buses being what they are, she arrived at 8.10 a.m. The man "at the desk," regulating the traffic, would not allow her to meet the Prime Minister because she was late. The following morning she was at 1, Safdarjung Road at 7.45 a.m. The desk man introduced her to the P.M.'s P.A., with the assurance. "He will take you to meet Morarjibhai."

But the P.A. turned around and told Satyarani candidly, "Why do you want to meet him anyway? All he is going to do is to take the papers you have brought with you and pass them to me." But Satyarani was adamant. By then she was squatting on the floor, creating a lot of noise and refusing to budge till she was allowed to talk to the Prime Minister. At that stage, Morarji Desai emerged from his room with a large group of people who wanted to get themselves photographed with him.

Satyarani walked up to him. "I had the photo of my dead daughter in my hand and was weeping freely by this time," she recalls. **"Apke raaj mein atyachar ho raha hai,"** she told him. "To seek justice I have come to your door." The P.A. interjected. "She is mad." Morarji Desai heard her for a few minutes. Then he turned to her and asked, "If you want to be photographed with me you had better stand here." Satyarani was furious, **"O Jantawallon, betiyan marvayo aur photo kichwayo,"** she told the Prime Minister.

Meanwhile she read in the day's engagement columns one day that certain women's organisations were meeting at the Police Headquarters that day in connection with dowry deaths. When she arrived there, she was taken in to see J. N. Chaturvedi by them. He assured her all police help. Subsequently, she says, she must have seen the Police Commissioner at least half a dozen times. "Our investigation is going on," he would tell her.

Then, one day, the Investigating Officer accosted her, "Why do you keep coming to the Commissioner Saheb? **Ek clerk ki bigarhi hui file ko koi officer kaise sudhar sakta hai."** To protect one innocent person, the Indian law enabled 100 guilty persons to go scot-free, he told her. "Moreover, even if we hang Subhash, your daughter is not going to come back."

Having launched out, Satyarani was not about to give up so easily. She went to see parliamentarian Kanwarlal Gupta. His promises of help led to the case being transferred to the Crime Branch.

Meanwhile, the accused were granted bail. When an upset Satyarani approached Nari Raksha Samiti, they decided to stage a demonstration outside the boy's home in Gandhinagar. **"Shashi ke hatyaron ko phansi do,"** the placards screamed. Some women of the neighbourhood also joined them. Then the processionists marched to the then Home Minister, H. M. Patel, and presented him a memorandum. The women's group also met Lt. Governor Kohli. "We are making a special cell to look into dowry deaths," he told them optimistically. And that was the end of the matter.

Soon thereafter, Morarji Desai was replaced by Charan Singh. Satyarani made her way again to the Prime Minister's house. "You have met Morarji Desai, now you want to meet Charan Singh and get this published in another paper," the same "desk man" taunted her. He refused to allow her in.

Undaunted, she went to meet the then Home Minister, Y. B. Chavan. "A country where women cannot be protected can't be saved," he exhorted and promised to usher in a new law on dowry if his government survived. It did not.

Another change of government followed. Early this year, when she went to see Police Commissioner Bhinder, he told her he would get her case reopened. On the next occasion when she saw him it was, "Yes, I am looking in your case." And the third time: "There is nothing in your case. We are sending it to be cancelled. However, proceedings have been launched against the boy under the Dowry Act."

But the dowry case was dismissed recently. The magistrate ruled that the scooter demanded by Subhash on March 15, 1979 — two days before the girl died — was not "in consideration of marriage." It could not be considered as dowry because Satyarani had promised the boy a scooter at the birth of their first child, though it was done in an attempt to placate him whenever he raised his demand.

To prevent the case from being cancelled, Satyarani Chaddha went to see Home Minister, Giani Zail Singh. He promised to refer the case to the C.B.I. But when a month later she went to Bhinder to make sure that the case had in fact been transferred, he told her, "No order has come to me so far."

Again to Zail Singh's residence. Endless waits. Finally, **"Bibi ka kaam kara do na,"** he told his staff. Ten days later, the file was transferred. And there the matter rests for the moment.

The problem is an old and familiar one. The law being what it is, witnesses are required to come forward and testify that they saw Shashi Bala being burnt to death. Our society being what it is, nobody from the colony is prepared to come forward and give this evidence. Most people say to themselves, "It is Satyarani's daughter, not mine. Why should I give evidence and invite police harassment or **goonda** intimidation?" The failure of neighbours to cooperate has not only removed any social safeguards that existed, but also reduced the applicability of the law. And unless the community begins to feel a sense of responsibility and this is incorporated in our social norms, brides will continue to be beaten and burnt.

"There has been talk of changing the law on dowry for so long that my ears are tired of hearing it. But when is it going to happen? After thousands more have been killed? Or when a Prime Minister's daughter is burnt to death?" In any case, making the Prohibition of Dowry Act more stringent is not going to deal with the problem of bride-burning, which is a separate issue altogether but one that also requires the urgent attention of law-makers.

All that Satyarani Chaddha asks is for the system to function. And who has created in her and thousands like her the loss of faith in its functioning? It is these Secretaries of Ministeries, the rule-bound legal advisers, the corrupt and inefficient police apparatus, the sluggish courts, the headline-hogging methods of voluntary agencies, which are all supposed to be existing for the benefit of Satyarani and those like her but which are the ones who let them down.

Meanwhile, it is heartening that in the absence of any police action, a private complaint was moved not long ago by Mrs. Chaddha under Section 200 of the Criminal Procedure Code in the Magistrates Court in Gandhinagar. She was backed by a newly-formed Solidarity Front of various women's organisations and concerned citizens and assisted by a legal aid cell constituted by the Front. Rani Jethmalani appeared for Mrs. Chaddha.

Though the purpose of filing the complaint on October 4 this year was to expedite the matter, the magistrate posted the case for its initial hearing only on January 3, 1981. On grounds of delay in justice, Ms Jethmalani moved a Special Leave Petition in the Supreme Court under Article 36 of the Constitution. The court has directed the state to produce all the records of the case. At the time of writing, these have not yet been produced.

Continued from page 47

yarns and continue with Blue yarn in rows of tr., dec. 1 st. at each end of 3rd row and in following 4th row twice (118 sts.). Continue straight in tr. till work measures 57 cms. in length at the end of the last row work 70 ch., turn.

SLEEVES:

1 tr. in 4th ch. from hook, 1 tr. in each ch. and then continue over the row of tr. to end, remove loop from hook, join a fresh length of yarn to last tr. with this work 68 ch. and fasten off. Pick up yarn loop on the main work and continue along the row of ch., working 1 tr. in each ch. to end, 2 ch., turn. Work 3 more rows of tr. across all the sts.

SHAPE NECK:

Keep 50 sts. at centre for neck and work sleeve on 102 sts. on each side. Work 4 rows of tr. on 102 sts., then work the multi-coloured pattern from the given chart as before working 2 Blue sts. on each side. After completing the pattern, work 3 rows of Blue tr. and fasten off.

Leave 50 sts. for neck and work the other sleeve to match first sleeve. With Blue yarn work a row of dc. starting at lower end of left sleeve edge. Work up the left sleeve edge, across shoulder edge, down left side of neck across front of neck, up right side of neck, across right shoulder and down right sleeve edge working 3 dc. in each of the 2 corners of each of the 2 shoulders and 3 dc. tog. at each of the 2 corners of neck.

BACK:

Work as for front but work 7 rows of tr. (instead of 3 rows) before neck shaping.

Shape neck and start the multi-coloured pattern in the same row. Work and complete sleeves to match front sleeves work a row of dc. as for front.

TO MAKE UP:

Join sides and lower edges of sleeves leaving 20 cms. open from lower edge. The shoulder seams are held in position by 10 cords worked for each sleeve (5 for the front and 5 for the back). To work each cord, work a row of ch. 10 cms. in length, turn and work a s.s. into each ch. to end, fasten off. Similarly work 19 cords more. Attach one end of each of the 5 cords to each shoulder edge spaced evenly. Tie bow with corresponding cords (refer photograph).

Arnavaz Dhondy

FRANKLY SPEAKING

Devi

THE KISS THAT MISFIRED

Her aunts (could be any one from Lata to Asha Bhonsle, etc), father Pandhari Kolhapure and country cousins hatched a plot overnight. Padmini herself was a willing participant in the plot. The plot was that when Prince Charles, one of the most eligible bachelors across five continents, visits V Shantaram's studio, and the shooting of "Ahista Ahista" (that was the only shooting in town convenient for the Prince's tight schedule), Padmini should kiss him. Apart from headlines, the ghatans thought the Prince would be dazed and fall in love with Padmini.

After Shashikala performed the aarti, Padmini followed with a garland. When Charles bent his head for the five-footer Padmini, she just grabbed him and kissed him on the cheek. The Prince, with his British sense of humour, coped with the situation saying, "Is kissing allowed on the Indian screen?" Padmini, who by now had run out of breath like she had swam across the English Channel, went on to explain (unasked) in desi fashion, "This is my first kiss," etc.

The Prince, very cool, ignored her on the lawns outside when he accepted barfi from Shashikala but not from Padmini who went in for more messy antics like, "Did you resent my kissing you?" etc. expecting an "On the contrary, I was thrilled," type of answer. The heir to the British throne brushed her off with three words, "Not at all."

All this while, V. Shantaram was informing the Prince that kissing is not a part of Indian culture. Damn the culture! Just because the Khajuraho porno in stone did not know about it. Surely Chimpu Kapoor is more knowledgeable than our ancestors or, like the Kapoors who skip the soup, he skips the preliminaries and comes straight to the point.

Our stars, especially females, are namoonas. When it comes to any foreign celebrity, they turn into fans; their mouths dripping with saliva, they clamber all over them. When abroad, I do not own them up. Imagine introducing them to their foreign counterparts and they running with autograph books like school children. Not that the Kolhapures will allow the matter to end: we will now have a crop of interviews with headings like, "The kiss that broke the Chimpu-Padmini affair," or, "R. K. Camp disapproves of Padmini" to "The Prince and the Show Girl."

As for the Britishers, they will just pass off Indian filmdom as a strange species which does not yet know the use of lips Nimmi, when she went with Mehboob Khan for the premiere of "Aan" in London, declared to the British press that "she was still unkissed." Of course there were no takers, but virgin Indian lips are an old stunt for the Londoners.

* * *

Tina Munim, the toothpick-size heroine, has come to the end of her run unless she gets engaged to Sanju Dutt. Sanju looked misty eyed and grown up at a filmi party. Nargis, the reports say, has improved miraculously. The miracle is that one man, Sunil Dutt, and his faith. He looks almost a Sanyasi with blisters on his feet, standing outside his wife's room, while every breath in New York for the Dutts costs a few hundreds. As Dag Hammerskjold put it, "It is faith that moves, faith that works, Men call it miracle."

PEOPLE AND EVENTS

BOMBAY

Shreya Dalal will hold her 5th exhibition of creations in shells and plants at the Eka Art Gallery, Chowpatty, on January 8, 9, and 10, 1981. The proceeds of the sale will be donated to the Helen Keller Institute for the Deaf and Deaf-Blind.

* * *

The College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan, held a symposium on "Higher Education as an Instrument of Social Change" to conclude its silver jubilee year at the college premises. The chief speakers at the seminar were Dr. A.K. Jalaluddin, Professor, NCERT, and the Former Director, Directorate of Adult Education, New Delhi, and Mr. M.V. Kamath, Editor, The Illustrated Weekly of India.

* * *

Prithvi Books-Graphics recently presented for the first time in Bombay an exhibition of drawings and original etchings on the "The Manto Theme" (an edition of 21 portfolios) by A. Ramachandran at Prithvi Theatre.

* * *

The Sea Rock Queen contest sponsored by the Sea Rock Hotel, Bandra, was held at the Agnel Gift Garden. The Agnel Gift Garden is an annual affair organised in aid of their orphans and destitute children of all castes and communities who are provided with shelter, food and clothing. At present the Agnel charities run a complex of educational and technical institutions in Bombay, Delhi and Goa.

* * *

"The Kookies"; Jackie and Lynn Green are two talented sisters from England who will be performing in the Supper Club, Hotel Oberoi Towers, beginning Dec. 24. A singing and dancing duo who have had extensive professional dance training, Jackie and Lynn come from a very talented family.

* * *

Navratan, a film and cultural team, recently held their inauguration celebrations at Taj Mahal Hotel. Launched by Mr. Sudhir Mangar, Navratan's goal is to achieve maximum possible perfection of cultural activities, films, and other fine arts, emphasising on new talent.

In January, Navratan will present a show entitled, "Famous Romantic Couples", a unique combination of dance, drama, stage, with spectacular light and sound effects.

DELHI

Devyani is French, and a student of classical ballet. But inspired by a film on India in which there was a sequence on Bharata Natyam, she started training under Amla Devi in Paris. She was given a scholarship under the auspices of the Franco-Indian Cultural programme in 1973 and she trained in Madras under well known gurus. Currently in Delhi, Mr. N. Ajwani and Chander Ajwani organised at the Kamani Auditorium, a performance by Devyani. She was extremely good in both her footwork and Abhinaya and thrilled the audience with her versatility and verve.

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1. A lavish party was hosted for the delegates of the 19th All India Hotel&Restaurant Convention 1980, by Hotel Oberoi Towers, Bombay. Seen (from left) are Mr. Raghu Raj, Chairman and M.D., Air India, Mr. A. Siddiqi, G. M., Oberoi Towers, the Governor of Maharashtra, Air Chief Marshal (Retd.) O. P. Mehra and Mrs. Raghu Raj.

2. Mr. Dilip Kumar, Sheriff of Bombay, inaugurated an exhibition of embroidered and appliqued sarees held at Eka Art Gallery by Mrs. Geeta Loyalka (centre).

3. At the reception hosted by the Governor of Maharashtra and Mrs. Satya Mehra to meet H. R. H. The Prince of Wales, are seen (from left) the Governor, Mrs. Gulshan Ewing, Editor, Eve's Weekly and Star & Style, and Prince Charles.

The Somali Democratic Republic held their National Day at the Maurya Sheraton. The Ambassador H. E. Abdualishi Egel Nur and his wife received their many guests from Diplomatic Corps. Govt. officials and many friends.

CALCUTTA

The Round Tables of Calcutta held the 4th Round Table Quiz-Contest 1980 for the Bankura Horse Trophy at the Saturday Club. The Quiz Master, Alban E. Scott quizzed the finalist teams with a plethora of questions from Greek mythology to modern fashion. This popular quiz contest was convened by M.A. Fazel and sponsored by the National Tobacco Company of India Ltd.

* * *

At a solemn function, the Convocation of the School of Languages of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Golpark, the prizes and certificates were distributed to over 1000 successful students in different foreign and Indian languages. Mr. Robin Twite, Regional Education Adviser, The British Council, Calcutta, delivered the Convocation address and spoke on "The Value of Reading". The Convocation was presided over by Swami Lokeswarananda, Secretary of the Institute. The prizes and certificates were distributed by Mrs. Twite.

MADRAS

The Lioness Club of Madras, Egmore, celebrated a Ladies and Children's night at Hotel Ashoka with a variety entertainment of dance and music. A lively fashion show was presented by Mrs. Martha Eipe. Popular cine artistes, Kamalahasan, Deepa and others graced the occasion adding life and colour to the evening's celebrations. The fashion show was later performed at the Hotel Chola when a delegation of Lions from Sweden visited the city.

LUCKNOW

A "Calcium-Sandoz Baby Contest" was jointly organised by the Laxmanpuri Jaycees and Sandoz, in which nearly 200 children took part. A panel of eminent doctors including Dr. (Miss) Lajja Mehta, gynaecologist, and Dr. (Mrs.) P.K. Mishra, paediatrician, judged the entries on the basis of physical growth and development, and immunisation status.

Nine-month old Huzzam Khodaiji won the first prize in the under-one year group while Abhay Natoo, Anshu and Amit Mandiratta received the first, second and third prizes in the one-to-three age group. All contestants were given gifts by Dr. V. Kumar of Sandoz.

HYDERABAD

At the Children's Day celebrations at the Nizam College grounds, the Chief Minister, Mr. T. Anjiah gave away awards to top ranking students, and took the salute at the marchpast. There was an interesting display of mass drill and physical exercises by students of various schools.

SIMLA

The Amateur Artists Association of Nagpur gave its highest award to Mr. Sudershan Gour, noted Hindi stage-actor for his contribution to the Indian Stage, at the Dhanwaty Rang Mandir. The award was presented by Mr. V.C. Shukla, Union Minister, Civil Supplies.

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4. At an exhibition-cum-sale held by "Harini" at Cymroza Art Gallery, Bombay, are seen Mrs. Vimala Reddy (fourth from left) Mrs. Vimala Somaiah of Andheri Jaycees (ext. right) and others.

5. Mrs. R. Twite giving away prizes and certificates to a successful student at the convocation function of the School of Languages of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta. Also seen are Mr. R. Twite, and Swami Bhagatnanda.

6. Marianne Hoepfner and Oda Anderson, who won several prizes in the Himalayan Car Rally receive the Mobil Trophy from the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, at Hotel Maurya Sheraton in Delhi.

7. Members of the Madras Mylapore Ladies Circle No. 4 seen with the judges at a children's painting exhibition organised by them at Good Shepherd Convent.

THIS WEEK FOR YOU

FOR THE WEEK DEC. 21 — 27, 1980

John Naylor

IF IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK:

You may be making some sweeping changes or change course completely. Energy will be High, enthusiasm too, but see that you don't overdo things in July/August. A link with a person of completely different personality to yourself — an aggressive, and adventurous person, may turn out well. There will be plenty of romantic opportunities, but you find yourself deeply involved only in early 1982. If married, your relationship should be most rewarding; you may decide to add to your family. Moneywise, efforts made during the coming year should pay off well during 1982.

ARIES

(March 22 — April 20)

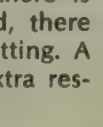
It looks like a family Christmas, but there is plenty of social activity. If unattached, there are promising meetings in a festive setting. A job offer holds much potential and extra responsibility.

TAURUS

(April 21 — May 21)

Sudden news or happenings could mean an alteration in arrangements. Try to stay organised, both at work and at home, early in the week, especially to allow for unexpected contingencies. Make time for your personal matters, and to relax.

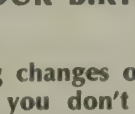
GEMINI



(May 22 — June 21)

Your ruling planet, Mercury, moves out of adverse position to your sign mid-week and life will be more tranquil than it was lately. Be tactful in close relationships. Relax over the holiday and don't be too lavish in entertaining.

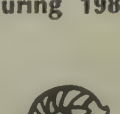
CANCER



(June 22 — July 23)

You will be inclined to take life and people too seriously. Ignore trivial irritations and don't place too much faith in promises. As far as you can, be independent.

LEO



(July 24 — Aug. 23)

Happy surprises from several directions this week. A lucky phase, with romance in the air, If married, a harmonious family scene, with helpful relatives around. A satisfying progress of youngsters.

VIRGO

(Aug. 24 — Sept. 23)

You make headway both in business and personal life. Exciting love life and some relationships may bring profit. Over the Christmas period there will be some happy meetings.

LIBRA

(Sept. 24 — Oct. 23)

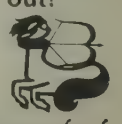
You will have changes on your mind, but give yourself a break during the festive season. If unattached, a new relationship is on the way; there will be promising introductions in a social setting. A lucky trend affects money matters.

SCORPIO

(Oct. 24 — Nov. 22)

A change of plan could bring a lucky turn of events, but expect the unexpected and you won't go far wrong! Seasonal gifts will be more than usually pleasing, but you might realise that you have left someone out!

SAGITTARIUS



(Nov. 23 — Dec. 22)

A most enjoyable week, with gestures of affection. Prospects look bright so plan optimistically. Until early January your planets will heighten your personality; if single, chance of a new romance.

CAPRICORN

(Dec. 23 — Jan. 20)

The Sun and Mercury move into Capricorn this week, joining Mars already in your sign. A fast moving phase of opportunity, for your ambitions. There will be plenty of flirtation offering, a lovely social atmosphere. If you are working hard at present, efforts will be profitable.

AQUARIUS

(Jan. 21 — Feb. 19)

Life should be rather lively just now, but if unattached, early 1981 looks most promising. Christmas parties will bring happy meetings and you'll be involved in some unusual group outings, maybe organising something special yourself. However, you will be overbusy shortly, so keep abreast of tasks.

PISCES

(Feb. 20 — Mar. 21)

Some minor uncertainties at the start of the week with companions keeping you on a string. But Christmas will be relaxed and also romantic. You may think of business plans, and prospects are bright.

THE GIFT

Continued from Page 49

"On second thoughts, I don't think I will," she said to herself. Swamy had been too dificult lately, balking at the slightest criticism, sulking at every request.

Wondering whether to think about the pathos of a public relations card being her only link to Christmas, or to continue thinking about Swamy, Old Mrs. Hill decided on the latter.

Swamy. The starving little rat of a boy whom she'd picked up from the pavement ten Christmases ago. A refugee from the drought-struck countryside, and the famine that had claimed his whole family. Swamy, whom she had coaxed back to life, caring for another human being for the first time since she was widowed. Swamy, who did errands for her, and was now a good cook. Swamy, who would inherit the flat and her insurance money.

Natually, she had misjudged the boy totally. At first she'd had dreams of him taking the place of the son she'd never had. Pretty soon she was disillusioned. He was suspicious of her, the brutality of his first five years of life went too deep. So she'd stopped bothering, not having enough vitality in herself to effect a personality change in the boy. Now he seemed happy enough to lounge interminably at street corners, smoking one vile beedi after another — no doubt regaling the other local servants with tales of his crazy old mistress and her absurd drunken demands. Another example of wasted effort. Another disappointment.

She suddenly noticed a sheet of paper from a lined notebook lying on the table. It must have been under the card. She picked it up, adjusting her glasses. It read:

No more taking Fifi for walkes

No more cleening Cleo box

No more pollishing brass

No more extra workses. I wonly cuking
Sined Swamy.

A tremor of excitement swept through her body. She clutched her pounding heart Swamy! Swamy had written that note. Swamy had actually **written.** All the months of patient tutoring, drilling in ABC — until Swamy's disgusted "I no like writing Muddum. I no like learning. You stop or I go." So it wasn't wasted. He'd actually written all on his own. A huge glow of accomplishment, a warm flood of joy engulfed her. She smiled broadly for the first time in year, re-reading the note, her pleasure more intense each time.

That was how Swamy found her, the note clutched in her hand, an aura of radiance about her like a halo.

"I tink Muddum happy to die," he remarked, bewilderedly to the doctor.

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